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AN OVERVIEW OF PAK - SOVIET/RUSSIA RELATIONS

Sarfraz Khan*
& Noor-Ul-Amin**

Abstract

Pak-Soviet/Russia relations have survived several strains since 1947. Prior to the partition, All India Muslim League and Indian National Congress had been adhering to different, even conflicting, ideologies. Muslim League formed by Muslim landed elites, belonging to various regions of Indian sub-continent, catered to the needs of the Muslim landed nobility, civil servants and lawyers. Indian National Congress claimed to be representative of Indian peasants and ideologically tilted towards socialism.

Following independence, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan was invited to visit USSR, in 1949, he instead, reached USA on an official visit. Moreover, Pakistan under the influence of landed nobility, western educated politicians, military and civil servants tilted towards USA and did not approve socialistic policies of the USSR. Despite a lukewarm behavior of Pakistan, USSR gave enough financial and technical assistance to Pakistan in the shape of establishing Steel Mills at Karachi and provided interest free loans. Pakistan, however, alleged that USSR has played inimical role in the East Pakistan debacle and the Soviet Union did not appreciate Pakistan's opposition to the Soviet role in Afghanistan. Russia also alleged Pakistan to have a role in inciting the Chechen and Daghistan uprising and Pakistan leveled similar charges against Russia of fueling insurgency in Baluchistan.

Despite unenviable past, there seems to exist much potential of developing Pak-Russia bilateral cooperation in the fields of diplomacy, trade, economy, science, technology, mining, prevention of drugs, extremism and terrorism, though numerous opportunities and much time has previously been wasted.

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Introduction

The foreign policy of Pakistan, soon after independence, did not stand on solid foundations and suffered from inconsistencies and imbalance.¹ Owing to some historical, geographical and ideological idiosyncrasies, Pakistan did not succeed in establishing closer, good neighborly ties with the Soviet Union. The roots of the most noticeable ideological idiosyncrasies, affecting Pak-Soviet relations, can be traced back to the pre-independence era of the Indo-Pak Subcontinent. Pak-Soviet/Russia relationship can arbitrarily be divided into five major periods: (1947– 1965), (1966-1971), (1972 – 1977), (1978- 1991) and (1992-2014). First four phases till 1991, provide a bird's eye view of Pak-Soviet and the last phase (1992-2014) discusses Pak- Russia relations.

Pre-independence India had heavily been influenced by the Great October 1917 Socialist Revolution, in Russia. The revolutionary message had virtually mesmerized the minds of the emerging Indian educated middle class in the initial decades of the twentieth century. The First Communist International (COMINTERN) in its first meeting, in March 1919, transmitted the message of revolution on the Soviet model across the globe.² The father of Russian Socialist Revolution, V. I. Lenin (1870–1924), called for establishing an international communistic social order, thus, invited not only progressive, educated social element of the European Continent, but also of the Indian Sub-continent, to join hands and materialize this dream.³

Before partition of India, the Soviet Union had longstanding relations with the Communist Party of India and Indian National Congress. Soviet Union rendered support to 'Right to Self Determination of Nations' and encouraged National Liberation movements in colonized countries, against imperial powers. Muslim League, on the other hand, did not have the vision to cultivate relations with the Soviet Union, an anti-imperialist power, in its neighborhood. Both, Soviets and Indian communists, also supported 'Right of Self Determination of Nations' and the creation of Pakistan, exercising democratic will of Indian Muslims, popularly known as two nation theory. However, subsequent rulers of Pakistan and pro west religious and other political forces, created an impression that Islam was not appreciated by the USSR since state and politics in the Soviet Union were separated from religion. The Communist Party of India (CPI) supported the Partition Plan of India, however, the right wingers propagated that the socialists and nationalists did not support partition of India.⁴

¹ Burk, S. M., *An Historical Analysis of Pakistan's Foreign Policy*. Oxford University Press, Karachi 1990, pp 20-21.

² Morgenthau, H. J., *Politics Among Nations*. 6th ed., Vanguard, Lahore 1991, p 75.

³ Williamson, H., *Communism and India*. Govt. of India Press, Calcutta 1935, p 321.

⁴ Ibid., pp 21-25.

In 1920, M. N. Roy (1887–1954), leading Indian communist, based in Great Britain, joined the International Communist Movement. Later, by 1934, well-known Indian Muslim intellectuals, including: Syed Sajjad Zaheer, Mahmudul Zafar, Rasheed Jehan, Dr. K. M. Ashraf, Hajira Begum also flocked this movement.⁵ The Progressive Writers Association (PWA), founded in 1936 in India, became the flag-bearer of socialist political thought in the Indian Sub-continent.⁶ Following the British withdrawal from India and emergence of two sovereign states – India and Pakistan, in 1947, numerous seasoned writers, poets and intellectuals, such as Sajjad Zaheer (1905-1973), Josh Maleh Abadi (1894-1982), Habib Jalib (1928-1993), Hasrat Mohani (1875-1951) migrated to Pakistan.⁷ Joining hands with renowned, local, prolific writers and poets including: Faiz Ahmad Faiz (1911-1984), Saadat Hussain Manto (1912-1955) and Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi (1920-2006), together with peasant and workers Unions, provided great impetus to the emerging socialist thought amongst budding intelligentsia and working people of Pakistan.

First Period (1947-65)

Two trends, both upward and downward, in the Pak-Soviet relations, can be witnessed in the in post-independence, first period (1947-1965). In the early decades of the establishment of Pakistan, the Communist Party of Pakistan had a significant influence in the lower and educated middle classes of the society. However, the witch hunt, followed by alleged involvement of poets and writers such as Sajjad Zahir, Sibte-e-Hasan and Faiz Ahmad Faiz along with some senior military officers in the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case, in 1951, compelled Communist Party Cadres to go underground.⁸ However, the nationalist and progressive political organizations, considered pro-socialist/Soviet, such as National Awami Party (NAP) its student wings, Democratic Students Federation (DSF) and National Students Federation (NSF), both in the West and East of Pakistan, continued functioning.

Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaqat Ali Khan (r.1947-1951), declining Soviet invitation to visit USSR in 1949, instead paid an official visit to USA.⁹ Moreover, holding of two sessions of the International Economic

⁵ *The Daily Dawn*, Peshawar, 12th October, 1954.

⁶ Malik, H., The Maxcist Literary Movement in India and Pakistan. In *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XXVI, August 1967, pp 82-89.

⁷ Zafar, A., *The Light: A History of the Movement for Progressive Literature in the Indo-Pak Subcontinent*, translation from urdu, Oxford University Press, Karachi 2012.

⁸ Zaheer, H., *The Times and Trial of the Rawalpindi Conspiracy, 1951, the Coup Attempt in Pakistan*. Oxford University Press, Karachi 1998, pp 204-210.

⁹ Burk, S.M., *An Historical Analysis of Pakistan's Foreign Policy*. Oxford University Press, Karachi 1990, pp 91-99.

Conference at Karachi and Tehran, in 1949,¹⁰ was interpreted by many observers in the USSR as Pakistan's active participation in the western efforts to create an anti-Soviet, anti-socialist block. Internally promulgation of a notorious law, the Public Safety Act,¹¹ passed in 1951, resulted in the arrest of many left leaning leaders,¹² allegedly involved in linguistic riots in former East Pakistan (Bangladesh). Pakistan's participation in the US sponsored military- economic alliances, such as South-East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) further worsened the possibility of Pak-Soviet bilateral relations.¹³ Many analysts view, not very friendly Soviet position on Kashmir and Pukhtunistan,¹⁴ an outcome, of those hostile towards USSR and socialism, facts.¹⁵ Moreover, downing by the Red Army of the U2, US spy plane, operated from Badaber, Pakistan,¹⁶ in 1960, further alienated the Soviets.

Steps bringing the two countries closer included: establishment of diplomatic relations, followed by exchange of envoys between the two countries, in 1949-50;¹⁷ Soviet initiative, in 1956, offering technical and economic assistance, to build Steel Mills;¹⁸ visit of Soviet Deputy Premier to Pakistan,¹⁹ declaring resolution of the Kashmir problem according to the will of the people of Kashmir;²⁰ reflected softening of Soviet policy towards Pakistan. In 1961, Pakistan was granted a loan worth \$3 million for technical support in oil exploration.²¹ Some by-agreements: covering operation of air services; exchange of cultural delegations; assistance for mechanization of agriculture; building power projects and promotion of technological and scientific knowledge, were inked.²² The Russian assistance to Pakistan to develop oil, gas and mineral resources was renewed in the 1960s with

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Amin, N.U., *Pak-Soviet Relations During Z.A. Bhutto Era 1972-77*. Unpublished M.Phil. thesis submitted to Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar, Peshawar 2008, pp 20-22.

¹² Ibid

¹³ Daily *The News*, Peshawar, dated 13.4.2007.

¹⁴ Mehmood, S., *Pakistan Political Roots & Development 1947-1999*. Oxford University Press, Karachi 2004, pp 202-204

¹⁵ Naseem, A., *Pak-Soviet Relations; 1947 – 1965*. Lahore, Progressive publishers 1989.

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Belokrenitsky, V.Y., *Llight Production in the Economy of Pakistan*, (Russian). Nayka, Moscow 1972.

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Rizvi, D.H.S., Soviet Aided Projects in Pakistan. In *Central Asia*, no. 20, Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar, Peshawar 1987, pp 14-18.

²⁰ Ibid., pp 14-18.

²¹ Daily *The News*, Islamabad dated 18.12.1998.

²² Ibid.

enhanced cooperation between the two countries.²³ In the same year, the Soviet Union provided \$519 million for the purchase of heavy machinery.²⁴

Second Period (1966-71)

During the 2nd period, in 1966, the Soviet Union played role of mediator enabling India and Pakistan to sign the Tashkent Declaration.²⁵ The same year, under the barter system, Pakistan exported rice, jute, cotton, etc., while Soviet Union exported vehicles and agricultural machinery.²⁶ These measures were aimed at improving bilateral relations. Pak-Soviet relations did improve following such confidence building measures following second visit of President Ayub Khan to the Soviet Union, in 1967. The hallmarks included: Expression of harmony over major international issues; extension of mutual co-operation; confirmation of decamping US military bases on Pakistani soil; increased volume of bilateral trade to Rs. 7 million; implementation of over 30 developmental projects, in Pakistan, funded and provided technical assistance by the Soviet Union.²⁷ Moscow promised \$200 million to implement Pakistan's Fourth Five Years Plan (1970-1975) when General Yahya Khan visited USSR in 1970.²⁸

Issues adversely affecting Pak-USSR relations included: Pakistan's facilitation of famous Henry Kissinger's secret visit to China in 1971;²⁹ Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty of 1971,³⁰ that enabling India to receive \$300 million annually;³¹ Pakistan's opposition to the Soviet proposal of Asian Collective Security System,³² allegedly aimed against China and last but not the least Soviet role during East Pakistan Crisis, in 1971.³³

Third Period (1972-77)

In the 3rd period, Z. A. Bhutto visited the USSR twice, in a span of five years (1972-77), to give further impetus to Pak-Soviet relations. His first

²³ Quraish, K., Pakistan and USSR. In *Pakistan Horizon*, no. XXVII, University of Karachi, Karachi 1974, pp 61-64.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Mehboob, A., *Popeadia, Pakistan's Relations with Soviet Union 1947 – 1979: Constraints and Compulsions*. Pakistan Study Center, University of Karachi, Karachi 1988, p 78.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Malik, H., *Soviet-Pakistan Relations and Post-Soviet Dynamics, 1947-92*. Macmillan, London 1994, p251.

²⁸ Hydier, S., *The Foreign Policy of Pakistan*. Dava Publications, Lahore 2000, p 59.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ *The Daily DAWN*, Karachi, February 14, 1972.

³¹ Indo-Soviet treaty was signed on August 9, 1971, See : Khalida Qureshi. Pakistan and USSR. In *Pakistan Horizon*, no. xxvii,(I), 1974, p 61.

³² Jan, J.P., *Soviet Policy Towards Pakistan and Bangladesh*. New Delhi 1974, p30.

³³ Ibid.p.31.

visit (16-18 March 1972) broke ice in the backdrop of East Pakistan Crisis, following the independence of Bangladesh. Both the countries agreed to restore Pak-Soviet trade, enhance cooperation in geological prospecting, building a metallurgical works in Karachi and help in power generation.³⁴ They expressed unanimity of views on resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict, withdrawal of foreign troops from Indo-China, termination of the arms race and keeping nuclear disarmament under effective control. They also called for a rational approach to solve contentious issues. The identity of views ensured Pakistan's vote in United Nations.³⁵

Soviet economic assistance to Pakistan was significant in many ways since it transferred technology and did not attach political strings. The year 1973 witnessed a remarkable improvement in Pak-Soviet economic and scientific relations: visits of the Soviet economic delegations;³⁶ arrival of Pakistani students to USSR;³⁷ signing of cultural agreements³⁸ and above all the inauguration of Karachi Steel Mills.³⁹ In 1973, a number of Soviet economic delegations and steel experts visited Pakistan, USSR also wrote off credit utilized in East Pakistan, before 1971.⁴⁰

To boost trade between the two countries, a seven member Soviet delegation led by trade minister visited Pakistan, in 1973, envisaging a trade turnover of \$ 12.4 million each way for 1973, \$ 14.9 million during 1974 and 1975 each.⁴¹ In 1973, a Soviet embassy press release stated that Pakistan will import 2300 tractors from USSR.⁴² Other Soviet exports to Pakistan, in 1974, included road metalling machinery.⁴³ In February 1974, Pakistan and the Soviet Union concluded a barter trade agreement.⁴⁴ In 1974, a contract was signed in Islamabad with a Soviet firm for the purchase of machinery worth Rs. 2300 million. Another credit package of 160 million Roubles for Karachi Steel Mill was signed in December 1974.⁴⁵ With the purpose of strengthening bi-lateral economic ties, several steps were taken from 1975-77. On February 1975, Soviet deputy minister for foreign trade visited Pakistan and a program was concluded for the exchange of goods. Before leaving for Moscow, the leader of the delegation said in Karachi that

³⁴ Ibid.p.35.

³⁵ Ali, M., *Reading in Pakistan Foreign Policy*. Oxford University Press, Karachi 2013.

³⁶ *The Daily Dawn*, dated 26-11-2012.

³⁷ Lawrance Ziring, L., *The Foreign Policy of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto*. Oxford University Press, Karachi 1990, p 130.

³⁸ Ibid.p.132.

³⁹ *The Daily Dawn*, Karachi, dated 19-12-2012.

⁴⁰ *Pakistan Year Book*, Lahore, 1971.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² *The Daily Dawn*, Karachi, dated 16.2.2010.

⁴³ Gankovski U. V. et.al., *Present Pakistan, Economy, History and Culture*. Nayka, Moscow 1976.

⁴⁴ *The Daily Dawn*, Karachi, dated 16.2.2010.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Pakistan and the Soviet Union will sign a five year trade agreement.⁴⁶ In 1975, Pakistan and the USSR entered into an annual program of exchange of scientific expertise. Bhutto's policies of nationalization and the tilt towards socialism were encouraged and praised by *Arkady Maulaninkov* the Islamabad based *Pravda* correspondent.⁴⁷ In May 1977 the Soviet trade delegation arrived in Islamabad and signed a trade protocol providing for an exchange of goods worth \$ 15 million.⁴⁸

Fourth Period (1978-91)

Military dictator General Zia-ul-Haq overthrew democratically elected government on 5 July 1977. In the fourth period, Pak-Soviet relations nose-downed, following the Saur Revolution in Afghanistan and entered a new phase after Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan, in December, 1979. Soviet support in terms of 100,000 troops to a revolutionary Afghan regime in Pakistan's neighborhood brought a radical change in the region. The Afghan issue became the main point of friction in Pak-Soviet relations. Ouster of Sardar Daud Khan in April 1978 by revolutionary PDPA, led by Noor Muhammad Tarakki, a well-known socialist had not even caused deterioration of relations to such a level. Pakistan recognized the government headed by PDPA and Pakistan's internationally isolated military dictator, General Zia ul Haq, visited the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, in September, 1978.⁴⁹

Despite a revolutionary change in Afghanistan, the then Finance Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan, visited Moscow in July 1978 and Soviet Union assured continued Soviet credit facility for Karachi Steel Mills. He lauded Soviet assistance and termed friendship with the Soviet Union, 'a basic principle' of Pakistan's foreign policy.⁵⁰ He also extended Mr. Alexai Kosygin, Soviet Prime Minister, invitation to visit Pakistan, which he accepted and expressed his intention to plan a state visit 'in the near future'.⁵¹ By the end of 1978, influx of refugees from Afghanistan to Pakistan began. In March 1979, Soviet media began systematically accusing Pakistan of 'interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs'.⁵² By this time

⁴⁶ Bhutto, Z.A., *Reshaping Foreign Policy of Pakistan*. Passia Publishers, Lahore 1973, pp 17-19.

⁴⁷ Belokrenitsky, V.Y., *Light production in the Economy of Pakistan* (Russian). Nayka, Moscow 1972.

⁴⁸ Haq, N., ed., *Pak Russia Relations*. IPRI, Islamabad 2007.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan, *Foreign Affairs Year Book 2006-07*. Government of Pakistan, Islamabad 2007, pp 81-82.

⁵¹ Ali, L.A., *Towards the Tashkent Declaration*. Quaid-I-Azam University, Islamabad. Retrieved from pu.edu.pk/images/journal/csas/PDF/Lubna%20Abid%20Ali.pdf, accessed on 10/10/2014.

⁵² Amin, N., *Pak-Soviet Relations During ZA Bhutto's Era (1972-1977)*. Unpublished M.Phil. Thesis, Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar, Peshawar 2008, p 28.

Afghanistan had become a pivotal issue in Pak-Soviet relations. Interestingly, on the eve of the Soviet invasion, visit to Afghanistan of Pak Foreign Minister, Mr. Agha Shahi had been scheduled, but was cancelled, following the Soviet action.⁵³ Bilateral political friction notwithstanding, the Soviet Union did demonstrate a rather 'business as-usual approach' towards Pakistan.⁵⁴ The Soviet Union sent delegations to inaugurate Soviet funded projects such as Guddu Thermal Power Station and the Karachi Steel Mills. Political hostility over Afghanistan did not adversely affect these projects rather bilateral trade increased by 25 %.⁵⁵ The Soviet Ambassador kept roaming around and even offered Pakistan nuclear power plants. During last encounter at the UNO between Mr. Andrei Gromyko and Mr. Agha Shahi, in September 1980, though the Soviet Foreign Minister chided his Pakistani counterpart, "you seem to want to fight a war with us",⁵⁶ however, did invite him to visit Moscow for parleys. Soviets supported Democratic Republic of Afghanistan while Pakistan along with so called 'free world' provided overt and covert assistance to the Afghan Mujahideen waging jihad against the Soviet infidels in the 1980s.

In November 1982, General Zia, visited Soviet Union, to participate in the funeral ceremony of President Brezhnev and openly expressed his views of having a peaceful Afghanistan. Despite Soviet friendly overtures towards Pakistan the military regime continued hostility towards Soviet communists and their puppets in Afghanistan. Pak-Soviet relations moved forward after Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and the restoration of democracy in Pakistan, in 1988. On 1st March 1990, the USSR again offered a nuclear deal to Pakistan to fulfil increased power generation needs. The Soviet Ambassador to Pakistan, V. P. Yakunin said, 'once the required guarantees are provided, there is no harm in supplying a nuclear power plant to Pakistan'.⁵⁷ The Production Minister of Pakistan, Shahid Zafar, immediately visited Moscow in response to the offer and discussed the issue, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Tanveer Ahmad, also paid a visit.⁵⁸ However, owing to technological reasons, Benazir Bhutto's regime preferred to secure a French deal which remained a non-starter.

⁵³ Haq, N., ed., *Pak Russia Relations*. IPRI, Islamabad 2007.

⁵⁴ Ibid

⁵⁵ Gankovaski, U.V., *Present Pakistan, Economy, History and Culture*. Nayka, Moscow 1976, p 19.

⁵⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan, *Foreign Affairs Year Book 2006-07*. Government of Pakistan, Islamabad 2007, pp 94-95.

⁵⁷ Hassan, Z., *Pakistan Relations with USSR*, 1996. In *The World Today*, no. II, January, 1969.

⁵⁸ *Monthly Press Review*, Lahore, April, 1990.

Fifth Period Pak-Russia Relations (1992-2014)

Succeeding Soviet/ Russian Governments, including that of President Boris Yeltsin continued strategic partnership with India, supplied spares and new equipment that strengthened their military relations. On the other hand USA had not only forbidden supply of new military equipment to Pakistan in 1990, following enactment of The Pressler Amendment, during Bush Administration, but also spares, maintenance, repair and up-gradation facilities of equipment supplied even prior to 1990. Pakistan had not been able to diversify its sources of military hardware supply, hence, succeeded in purchase of barely Agosta submarines and reconditioned, old Mirage 5 fighters from France. Not only due to the cash crunch but also fear of US sanctions, under the Pressler Amendment, played a significant role. Pakistan failed to secure purchase of Russian equipment and also faced huge difficulties in buying 300 tanks from Ukraine.⁵⁹ It seems Pakistan's repeated expressions of interest in Russian equipment were actually aimed at causing concern in the US, that in case of non-removal of the Pressler Amendment, Pakistan could buy Russian military equipment leading to further dwindling of American influence on the armed forces of Pakistan.

Moscow did not appreciate alleged role of Pakistani Intelligence Services: firstly as a promoter of war against Afghan Government; secondly, not only creating the Taliban and enabling them seize power in Kabul but also supporting them to extend control over 90 percent of the Afghan territory. Russia also viewed with suspicion greater interest of Inter Services Intelligence, ISI, in supporting religious extremist organizations including: *Markaz Dawa Al Irshad*; *Lashkar-e-Taiba*, its militant wing, *Harkat-ul-Mujahideen* (HUM) and the *Tablighi Jamaat*. Similar assistance, she believed, has been extended to anti-Russian religious extremists, zealously committing violent subversive activities in Chechnya, Dagistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.⁶⁰

Moscow frequently expressed robust apprehensions over the eulogisation of Chechnyan extremist leaders in Pakistan and existence of training camps in Pakistan, and Taliban-controlled, Afghanistan.⁶¹ It was widely believed that during second tenure of the Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto in the early 1990s, not only ISI but also religious extremist outfits covertly provided training to Bosnian Muslim groups, to fight the Serbs, in confidence with the US.⁶² Similar assistance was, allegedly, also extended to the Muslims of Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) to fight Belgrade, during Government of Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif. Russian officials suspected

⁵⁹ Retrieved from <http://defence.pk/threads/indias-ayni-military-base-in-tajikistan-is-russia-locked.215493/page-20>, accessed on 10/10/2014.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ *The Daily Dawn*, Karachi, dated 20.10.2007.

⁶² Khan, R. M., *Afghanistan and Pakistan, Conflict, Extremist and Resistance to Modernity*. Oxford University Press, Karachi 2011, pp 89-90.

that Pakistan has been playing a formidable role in the American strategy to disintegrate Yugoslavia, despite her displeasure at Washington over invoking Pressler Amendment. Moreover, promoting dissatisfaction against Moscow amongst the Muslim population of Chechnya and Caucasus and Dagestan by Pakistan, Russia feared, were in consonance with US design to dismember the Russian Federation. Russia and the Central Asian Republics were eagerly watching future plans of the Taliban.⁶³ Russia also expressed displeasure over inept Pakistani narcotics control authorities, unable to stop uninterrupted, enlarged smuggling of narcotics into Russia via the Central Asian Republics, especially, Tajikistan.⁶⁴

Despite such inhibiting factors, tentative steps to improve bilateral relations were successfully initiated by PM Benazir Bhutto. To assure Moscow of Pakistan's goodwill and build confidence a liaison relationship between the ISI and the Russian intelligence was created that shared counterterrorism and counter-narcotics information. This process continued following return to power of Nawaz Sharif in February, 1997, the two countries exchanged notes on the situation in Afghanistan during periodic consultations between the Afghan experts of the two Foreign Offices. Pakistan also supported association of Moscow in finding a political solution in Afghanistan.⁶⁵

In July, 1997, serious initiatives to enhance bilateral trade, previously limited to barely US\$ 50 million, were agreed by the two sides during the visit to Moscow of the then Foreign Minister, Gohar Ayub Khan. Pakistan tried to sort out factors that delayed launch of Badr II, meteorological satellite of Pakistan's Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), by a Russian rocket.⁶⁶

The two Foreign Offices hotly contested in July, 1997, desirability of closer cooperation despite obstructing factors. The debate in Pakistan intensified, following Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's visit to the US in December, 1998, and failure in persuading the Clinton Administration to lift ban on the sale of new military hardware and spare parts of previously supplied equipment to Pakistan.⁶⁷

Russian Foreign Office mentioned informally to its counterpart in Pakistan that Russia shall not undermine the priority of its relations with India, still, she intends not to allow this to be a hurdle in improving relations with Pakistan. They, reportedly, hinted that Russia might not sell military equipment to Pakistan, however, need not forbid Ukraine and Belarus to sell military equipment to Pakistan. Resultantly, Pakistan's contract of purchase

⁶³ Retrieved from <http://defence.pk/threads/indias-ayni-military-base-in-tajikistan-is-russia-locked.215493/page-20>, accessed on 10/10/2014.

⁶⁴ Sattar, A., *Pakistan Foreign Policy 1947-2005*. Oxford University Press, Karachi 2007, pp 34-36.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ *Daily The News*. Islamabad, dated 28.08.1998.

⁶⁷ *The Daily Frontier Post*. Peshawar, dated 26.12.1998.

of tanks with Ukraine was implemented and Belarus offered sale of tanks and aircraft during the visit of Vasily Borisovich Dolgoliyov, the Deputy Prime Minister of Belarus to Pakistan, in November, 1998.⁶⁸

During his second tenure as Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif visited Russia in April 1999.⁶⁹ Prime Minister duly acknowledged Russia's role as a 'neighbour' and a 'global power' in mediating disputes in the region, the two sides re-affirmed the need of global relation to move towards a balanced multi-polar world, free of confrontation, based on sovereign equality of all states, democratic values and justice. Rectifying imbalance in Pakistan's foreign policy appeared still a distant and a rather abstract goal to critics advocating substantive gains from an opening towards Russia.⁷⁰

At security level, a new thinking in Islamabad and Moscow tended to promote closer understanding on security issues in Central and Southern Asia. Since Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tajikistan were three flashpoints in the politically volatile two regions, the understanding in Moscow that diplomacy, instead of war shall be used as an option to ensure the peaceful resolution of conflicts, provided a source of hope.⁷¹

Security cooperation between Pakistan and Russia could take place in dealing with non-traditional security threats such as terrorism, narcotics and drug trafficking, illegal flow of light weapons, environmental pollution, energy and water conflicts and so forth. Another area of security cooperation between Pakistan and Russia could be to control sources of ethnic and religious extremism in the two countries. Traditionally, Russia has maintained its security and strategic interests in Central and South Asia and the visit of Nawaz Sharif did give an opportunity to the two countries to bridge the gap between their security perceptions. Moscow remained a closer security partner of India, but in the post-cold war scenario, there has been a greater need on the part of Islamabad and Moscow to replace traditional notions of security with rational and logical considerations.⁷²

The possibility of mediation and facilitation of Russia in resolving outstanding disputes between India and Pakistan, particularly Kashmir has often been discussed in the relevant circles. In Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's visit to Moscow also, there was talk about possible Russian role in promoting peace in South Asia, namely at the Indo-Pak level. Historical evidence in terms of Russian facilitation did exist in the shape of resolving Tashkent Declaration. But any possibility of Moscow's helping hand or facilitation for resolving conflicts between India and Pakistan depends upon

⁶⁸ *The Daily Dawn*. Karachi, dated 28.4.1999.

⁶⁹ *The Economist*. U.K, May, 1999.

⁷⁰ Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar, *Pak-Russia: International Seminar on Confident Building Measure Between Pakistan, Russia And Central Asia*. Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar, Peshawar 2000, p 15.

⁷¹ *The Daily Dawn*. Karachi, dated, 2010.

⁷² *The Monthly Journal Press Review*. Karachi, May, 1999.

response of New Delhi. To alleviate the tension between India and Pakistan, Russia can encourage the two countries sustain the normalization process. Russia supported the Lahore Declaration and felt satisfied when India and Pakistan were involved in resolving their conflicts. Russia and Pakistan realize a greater need to support the peace process in Afghanistan and Tajikistan too. The joint statement issued by Russia and Pakistan after the conclusion of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's visit to Moscow, led observers to believe hope that the two countries could work together to help resolve various regional conflicts.⁷³

In the area of economic and trade cooperation, the visit of Pakistan's Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, in April, 1999, managed to break the logjam and three important steps were taken. Pakistan and Russia granted the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status to each other.⁷⁴ Signed the agreement on trade and economic cooperation stipulating that both sides grant non-discriminatory treatment to each other in taxes, customs as well as method and transfer of payments. The agreement was signed by Sartaj Aziz, Foreign Minister of Pakistan and the Russian Trade Minister, Georgy Gabunia on behalf of respective governments.⁷⁵ The agreement excluded preferential treatment provided by each country under any special arrangements as in groups like SAARC.⁷⁶ This replaced a barter trade agreement signed between the former USSR and Pakistan in 1956. Three points had emerged as an outcome of the visit of Prime Minister of Pakistan: Firstly, an agreement on trade cooperation was signed between the federations of the chamber of commerce and industry of the two countries,⁷⁷ covering private sector's arrangements of promotion of trade between the two countries. Secondly, the barter trade agreement was signed between the two governments. Thirdly, it was decided to create the Joint Ministerial Commission of the two countries to facilitate annual policy meetings at ministerial level and to examine joint ventures between the two countries.⁷⁸ Pak-Russia ties in economic and commercial spheres have been in favour of Russia, though annual trade between the two countries did not exceed \$75m, the real challenge has been to achieve a leap forward in bilateral trade. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif took initiative of re-conciliation between the two countries in April 1999, visiting Russia after 25 years.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Alexander Losyukov, visited Pakistan on 19 April 2001 and agreed to promote economic cooperation for peace and prosperity in the region.⁷⁹ Edward S. Shevchenko,

⁷³ Government of Pakistan, *Pakistan Foreign Affairs*. Pakistan Foreign Office, Islamabad 1999.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Monthly Journal, *Press Review*. Lahore, April, 1999.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ *The Daily Dawn*. Karachi, dated 22.04.1999.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ *Daily The News*. Islamabad, dated 25.04.2001.

former Russian Ambassador in Pakistan, stated in 2001 that Russia offers support for laying Gas pipeline from Iran to India via Pakistan. In fact Russian Gasprom did express intent in this \$4 billion project that led to signing in November 2002, a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources of Pakistan.⁸⁰ It might benefit Russian oil and gas companies, had they participated in the said project. Similarly, Russian Oil Company Rusneft and gas trader, Itera⁸¹ could also benefit from a commercially viable project of the Trans-Afghan Pipeline such as TAPI.

Russia can launch joint ventures to enlarge trade to improve existing relatively low trade volume between the two countries. The six member Russian parliamentary delegation visiting Pakistan in May, 2002 expressed intent to invest in Pakistan, particularly in the field of heavy machinery, construction equipment and agricultural products.⁸² Trade between the two countries has been fluctuating between: \$63 million in 1998-1999, \$93.34 million in 1999-2000, \$69.64 million in 2000-2001, \$83.45 million in 2001-2002, \$60.47 million in 2002-2003 and \$154.53 million in 2003-2004.⁸³

It has been noted that Pakistan's trade with Russia, is a meager 0.5% of its global trade, meaning economic and trade relations between Russia and Pakistan are far short of their real potential.⁸⁴ This fact was acknowledged by the Chairman of Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) of Pakistan at a seminar on 'Pakistan's Economy, Investment Opportunities and Pak-Russia Trade Relations, held in Moscow, in October, 2003.⁸⁵

Fiscal years, 1994-95 and 2003-04, have witnessed bilateral trade exceeding \$150 million, i.e., \$154.75 million and \$154.53 million respectively.⁸⁶ Bilateral trade rose, in 1994-95, owing to Russian sale of raw cotton to Pakistan along with iron and steel manufactures.⁸⁷ In trade of \$154.53 million, in 2003-04, Pakistan exported cotton fabrics, sports goods, toys, medical/surgical instruments, articles of textile materials and other commodities totaling \$20.5 million. Russia exported fertilizers manufactures, paper and paper products, iron and steel, crude rubber, and machinery and its parts totaling \$134 million.⁸⁸ Suffice to say that the balance of trade had been much in favor of Russia, thus, making imperative upon Russia to allow special concessions to Pakistani exports and grant Pakistan most-favored-nation status in trade and investments. The prompt settlement of issues such

⁸⁰ Report of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources, *Pakistan Year Book*. Islamabad 2002.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² *Daily The News*. Islamabad, dated 10.10.2003.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Khan, S.A., Pak-Russia Relations: Visiting Moscow 2007. In *Central Asia*, no. 62, Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar, Peshawar 2008.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Government of Pakistan, *Annual Report*. Chamber of Commerce, Peshawar 2004.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ *Annual Economic Survey of Pakistan*, Karachi, 2002.

as, debt restructuring of Pakistan, settlement of financial obligations, and promotion of inter-bank relations, required to be urgently and meaningfully addressed. Pak-Russia Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, particularly, the Joint Economic Commission, established in 2000,⁸⁹ needs to be revitalized to further strengthen, mutually beneficial economic cooperation, to pave way to bring the two countries closer, and improve bilateral relations, to promote stability and peace in the region.

A three-member Russian delegation of heavy mechanical industries visited Pakistan, in December 2003.⁹⁰ They visited Heavy Mechanical Complex at Texila, Pakistan Machine Tool Factory Karachi, and Spinning Machine Company Lahore and indicated willingness to provide expertise to textile sector of Pakistan.⁹¹ Russian automobile manufacturers can also invest in the automobile sector of Pakistan. In 2003, the Federal Minister of industry and production invited Russian automobile manufacturers to invest in assembling Russian-made cars and tractors in Pakistan. Russia can also supply special machinery to produce spare parts of tractors and automobiles. The Russians were also undertaking expansion work in 2003 at the Karachi Steel Mills established with their assistance in the 1970s.⁹²

General Parvez Musharaf visited Moscow in February 2003 and the then Prime Minister of Pakistan Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali in the following year. Surprisingly, after 38 years of Russian PM Kosygin's visit, in 1969, the Russian Prime Minister, Mikhail Fradkov, visited Pakistan on 13th April 2007.⁹³ Russian Prime Minister, Mikhail Fradkov and the Prime Minister of Pakistan Shoukat Aziz exchanged views on various projects. Pakistan and Russia agreed to conclude, an investment treaty, and agreement to avoid double taxation, to further expand trade and economic ties. Both the countries signed: an agreement of cooperation in combating human trafficking; smuggling of narcotics, drugs and psychotropic substances.⁹⁴ Three memoranda of understanding were also signed, to boost cooperation in various sectors, including: laying of new railway tracks; supply of sleepers and signaling system; up-gradation of Mughal Pura Bridge Workshop; and setting up metro railways, in major cities of Pakistan. State level contacts offer certain prospects between the Russian Federation and Pakistan to establish more cordial relations.⁹⁵ Strong demand in Russian market has accelerated potato exports from Pakistan to Russia. From January 2010 to February 16, 2010, around 25,000 ton potato had been exported fetching, around \$7.5 million, at

⁸⁹ *Daily The News*. Islamabad, dated 19.04.2007.

⁹⁰ *Daily The News*. Islamabad, dated 21.03.2003.

⁹¹ *The Daily Dawn*. Karachi, dated 12.12.2003.

⁹² *Daily The News*. Islamabad, dated 16.01.2004.

⁹³ *The Daily Dawn*. Karachi, dated 21.02.2010.

⁹⁴ *Daily Tribune Express*. Islamabad, dated 18.03.2007.

⁹⁵ Government of Pakistan, *Foreign Affairs*. Islamabad, Government of Pakistan, Vol.xxxiv (iv – vi), April-June, 2009.

an average price of, \$300 to \$315, per ton.⁹⁶ Exporters were optimistic of high potato exports during January–May, 2010, owing to strong demand from Russia, where a dry spell resulted in crop failure.⁹⁷

The Russian Ambassador in Pakistan, Andry Bandnik, on December 11, 2010, at launching of Pakistan–Russia Business Forum in Karachi, spoke about his government’s desire to strengthen economic ties with Pakistan, enhancing bilateral trade and exchange of technology. He stated that Russian exports to Pakistan primarily fertilizers, wheat, paper goods and rubber stood at \$ 346 million. Russian technology used in oil exploration, railways, power plants and steel sectors, may assist Pakistan, he opined. Tariq Rafi, another member of the Forum, noted that Pakistan’s exports to Russia stood at \$ 600 million, still quite low and insignificant, keeping in view the potential.⁹⁸ Earlier, on November 7, 2010, a Russian delegation had expressed keen interest in gas, mining, agriculture, livestock, healthcare and engineering sectors in Sindh.⁹⁹ At the Sindh Board of Investment, holding parleys with the Advisor to Chief Minister Sindh on Investment, Mr. Zubair Motiwala, the head of the delegation, Russian National Investment Agency’s Chief Executive Officer, agreed to explore possibilities of investing in these fields. Bright prospects of Russian investment existed in Pakistan.¹⁰⁰

Pakistan and Russia decided to enter into a new phase in defense cooperation, following first ever visit of a Pakistani Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Tahir Rafiq Butt to Russia on August 15, 2012. He visited various air force related Russian defense installations.¹⁰¹ He mentioned that Pakistan already in use of Russian made helicopters seeks diversification and expansion in this field, Russian choppers have been providing useful service to defense forces of Pakistan.¹⁰²

Russia also agreed to invest up-to \$500 million for expansion, rehabilitation and modernization of Pakistan Steel Mills. A Pakistani delegation visited Moscow to settle financial and technical terms of the project led to agree on a memorandum of understanding, signed by the two countries on October 3, 2012. It envisions modernization, reconstruction and expansion of production capacity of the Pakistan Steel by up to 1.5 million metric tons.¹⁰³ Russian company ‘Tyazhpromexport’ had helped establish this plant and shall carry out technical audit. Chairman of the Board of Investment, Saleem H. Mandviwalla and Russian Trade Representative in Pakistan, Yuri M. Kolsov, had signed a formal contract in December, 2011

⁹⁶ *The Daily Dawn*. Karachi, dated 16.02.2010.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*.

⁹⁸ *Daily The News*. Islamabad, dated 03.08.2012.

⁹⁹ *The Daily Dawn*. Karachi, dated 10.10.2010.

¹⁰⁰ *Daily Tribune Express*. Islamabad, dated March 2011.

¹⁰¹ *Daily The Frontier Post*. Peshawar, dated 20.08.2012.

¹⁰² *The Daily Dawn*. Karachi, dated 10.10.2010.

¹⁰³ *The Daily Dawn*. Karachi, dated 28.11.2012.

in this regard.¹⁰⁴ In the energy sector, Genco entered into a framework cooperation agreement with the Russian Company, Technopromexport, to convert the Muzaffargarh Thermal power plant from furnace oil to coal and to construct a new power plant at Jamshoro.¹⁰⁵ Both the countries agreed to consider setting up of a new plant with a capacity of 500 MW to 600 MW. They agreed that 15% of funds will be provided by Genco and 85% through a loan against a sovereign guarantee of Pakistan.¹⁰⁶ Urdu–Russian Dictionary, compiled by Tashmirza Khalmirzaev, a Diplomat of the former Soviet Union¹⁰⁷ was jointly launched by Russian Academy of Sciences and National Language Authority on 2.8.2012 in Islamabad.¹⁰⁸

In October 2012, the Chief of Army Staff, General Ashfaq Pervaiz Kayani visited Moscow on the invitation of Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, General Nikolai Makarov.¹⁰⁹ Pakistan's Army Chief's visit to Russia had attained conspicuous significance in the wake of a sudden calling off the visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to Pakistan for a quadrilateral summit of countries of the region. Despite this setback, General Kayani's visit took place, according to the understanding of the military command of the two countries.¹¹⁰ The importance of the visit could be gauged looking at the schedule of engagements of the Army Chief, in Russia. It provided him an opportunity to have deliberation on political level and close interaction with the military leadership. General Kayani was taken to sensitive defence installations and troop's engagements. The visit opened vistas of cooperation in the defence arena and enabled both sides to discuss extensively bilateral relationship and regional perspectives.¹¹¹

Pakistan eagerly looked forward to the landmark visit of the Russian President, its postponement did shock Pakistan, raising a few questions about issues whose impact transcend Islamabad's bilateral relations with Moscow.¹¹² To add to Pakistan's distress, postponement of President Vladimir Putin's visit without indicating future time frame, raised doubts whether the visit will ever happen? Though, President Putin's decision resulted into annulment of the quadrilateral summit involving Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan, which has been perhaps less worrying; the greater alarm expressed was regarding the direction Pak-Russia relations may lead

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ *The Daily Dawn*, Karachi, dated 22.07.2011.

¹⁰⁶ *Daily Tribune Express*, Islamabad, dated April, 2011.

¹⁰⁷ *Daily The News*, Islamabad, dated 03.08.2012.

¹⁰⁸ *The Daily Dawn*, Karachi, dated 30.09.2012.

¹⁰⁹ Yousaf, K., Shift in policy?: Army Chief to Make 'Historic' Moscow Trip. In *Daily Tribune Express*, Islamabad, dated 03.04.2012. Retrieved from <http://tribune.com.pk/story/430434/shift-in-policy-army-chief-to-make-historic-moscow-trip/>, accessed on 10/10/2014.

¹¹⁰ *The Daily Dawn*, Karachi, dated 13.10.2012.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² *The Daily Express Tribune*, Islamabad, dated 29.09.2012.

to. The Foreign office shall determine, why the Russian president chose not to visit Pakistan? Precise reasons of Russia's unhappiness may not be too difficult to discern: Moscow felt disappointed over Islamabad's delayed response to numerous vital projects, especially in energy sector, Russia expressed interest including plan to transmit electricity from Tajikistan to Pakistan, and construction of rail-road links. Also cause for annoyance has been Pakistan's dwindling interest in the Iran gas pipeline on which Tehran has completed construction inside its territory with Russian help. Though, Islamabad officially remains committed, however, Moscow has not failed to note Islamabad's attitude in terms of advertising tenders and awarding contract of project under American pressure.¹¹³

Kept on the back burner for a longer time, the relations with Russia seemed to find a new impetus when President Asif Ali Zardari visited Moscow in 2012.¹¹⁴ Projects, Pakistan has shown interest in seeking Russian assistance, include: Expansion of Pakistan Steel Mills and several infrastructure related projects. Despite Putin government's willingness, it seems Pakistan has not completed enough spade-work to start these projects.¹¹⁵ Russia has permitted import of citrus fruit from Pakistan with effect from 24th February, 2014. This will increase \$20 million instant financial benefit to the Pakistani exporters much more shall follow in due course. According to media reports, Pakistan Embassy in Moscow has consistently been struggling to achieve this goal and had met the head of Russian Sanitary Service Department, Dankvert Sergey Alexeevich and Rosselkhoznadzor in this regard. Consequent upon these meetings, the head of Federal Service, partially lifted ban on Pakistani Fruit Imports.¹¹⁶ According to a Press Release, members of Fito-Agro Centre of Russia visited Pakistan in this context in January, 2014 and talked to concerned officials on the increase of agricultural imports from Pakistan and informed the Pakistan Embassy in Moscow that ban over all agricultural products barring potatoes was lifted on 24th February, 2014.¹¹⁷

Conclusion

The inter-state relations between Pakistan and the former Soviet Union and/or present day Russian Federation had never been finding an easy track. Though currently the two countries hold similar opinions on major strategic international issues, such as: support to the concept of a multi-polar world, supremacy of the role of UNO; disapproval of unilateral actions and use of force to change the current international system; struggle against terrorism

¹¹³ *The Daily Dawn*. Karachi, dated November, 2013.

¹¹⁴ *Daily The News*. Islamabad, dated 29.11.2012.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*.

¹¹⁶ *The Daily "AAj"* (Urdu). Peshawar, dated 21.02.2014.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*.

and combating illicit narcotic's production, trafficking; illegal migration of human beings, strengthening of nuclear nonproliferation and push forward processes of regional cooperation. In the past relations suffered due to the idiosyncrasies and notions such as: Soviet Communists/Russians did not support creation of Pakistan; use of Soviet Union/Russia by Pakistan to blackmail the West and extract concessions; Pakistan joining anti Soviet imperialist alliances SEATO and SENTO; alleged Soviet/Russian support to India on Kashmir; Soviet/Russian role in the creation of Bangladesh and Pakistan's role in bleeding the Soviets/Russians in Afghanistan.

From 1947 to 1960 Pakistan's close military cooperation with USA remained a major cause of worsening relationship. In the mid-60s Pakistan's military ruler, Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan tried to redress, Soviet Union positively responded by facilitating Tashkent Peace Declaration between India and Pakistan in 1966. Some cooperation between the two countries began in the field of Defense and economy, however, internal instability in Pakistan and alleged USSR-India nexus to dismember Pakistan in 1971, resulting in the creation of Bangladesh, sealed the fate of improving relations between both the nations.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, flag-bearer of 'bilateralism', in the foreign affairs visited Soviet Union in March 1972 and October 1974. Not only he laid foundation but multiplied Pak-Soviet cooperation too in sectors such as science and technology, arts, culture, economy and education. The land mark had been package of 160 million Rubles for Pakistan Steel Mills, Karachi. Ceaseless gestures of Soviet friendship towards Pakistan including: barter trade agreements; exchange programmes in the fields of science, education, and training of Pakistani technicians and engineers in Soviet Union, to effectively run the Soviet-aided technical programmes in Pakistan; continued, in 1975-6.

In Pakistan, occupation of power by General Muhammad Ziaul Haq in July 1977; Saur Revolution; a pro-Soviet military coup in Afghanistan in April 1978, and Soviet armed intervention in Afghanistan, in December 1979, re-landed Pakistan in the formerly estranged American camp. Ensuing jihad (holy war) in Afghanistan against Soviet/Russian infidels, aided and abetted by Pakistan, clamped for almost two decades, fate of cooperation between Pakistan and Russia.

In the 90s Pakistan and Russian Federation, the successor state of Soviet Union, wasted opportunities, to initiate ties without idiosyncrasies, adversely affecting them, and to strengthen further in almost every field, particularly energy and technology. However, the level of Pakistan - Russia relations did not climb much since Russia was more inward looking and the thaw required vigorous efforts from both sides. The Pak-Russia rapprochement envisaged and envisioned by Presidents Pervaiz Musharraf and Vladimir Putin in February 2003, in Moscow, has not yet been realised. Much has to be done to expand bilateral ties; to address problems of conflict resolution;

and disarmament, particularly in nuclear sphere, in the region. Pakistan's inclusion into the SCO, facilitation of the closer interaction of Russia with ECO, OIC and SARRC may serve as important forums to develop political interaction between Pakistan and Russia. Granting Russia, Most Favored Nation Status, by Pakistan and consideration of mutual lowering of tariffs shall promote bilateral economic co-operation. Both Pakistan and Russia may certainly benefit if they cooperate in the field of heavy industry, oil and gas, aerospace technologies as well as textile and agriculture. Increased exchange of information; people to people contact; creating regional systems of international relations amongst the Central Asian countries, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Russia and China may be steps in further strengthening ties.



Source: <http://www.asian-defence.net/2014/06/russia-lifts-arms-embargo-from-pakistan.html>

It seems, both Pakistan and Russia, following high level visits of Pakistani Chiefs of Air and Ground forces have agreed to enter into agreements to purchase Russian made military equipment, including MI35 Helicopters.¹¹⁸ According to Russian Ambassador Alexey Y. Dedov, Russia is mindful of increased terrorism in Pakistan and will assist Pakistan in combating terrorism by supplying military hardware. Pakistan has ordered

¹¹⁸ Retrieved from <http://www.asian-defence.net/2014/06/russia-lifts-arms-embargo-from-pakistan.html>, Accessed on 10/10/2014

twenty five (25) MI 35 Helicopters¹¹⁹ and will be delivered in due course. This may serve as a prelude to the beginning of broader cooperation between the two countries and may lessen economic, technological and defense difficulties of Pakistan.

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THE VICISSITUDES OF RUSSIA-SYRIA RELATIONS: FORM COLD WAR ERA TO THE ARAB SPRING

*Imrana Begum**

Abstract

The Arab uprising convulsed the Middle East power politics. After two decades of post-cold war the United States and Russia are again confronting each other on the issue of Syria. In the beginning of the Arab spring the western and Russian reaction was similar. Both took same stand against the overthrowing of autocratic rulers and violation of human rights but the brutal killing of Muammar Qaddafi parted their ways. When the west wished to replicate intervention in Syria like Libya, Russia firmly stood up in favour of Bashar al Assad and repeatedly vetoed UN Security Council Resolutions that could allow the west to intercede in Syria. Since three years Syrian uprising has been continued neither the regime has toppled owing to Russian support nor the insurgences achieved their goal despite of full western patronage. The paper traces the history of Russia-Syria military, economic and strategic relations from the era of bipolar to unipolar world. It inquires the purpose behind the sudden tilt of USSR towards the Arab world and its role in the Arab-Israel wars. Furthermore, the reasons behind Russian strong support to Syria in the Arab uprising have also been explored.

Key words: *autocratic rule, Golan Heights, human rights, non-interference, overthrow soft influence, uprising, veto power, Zionism.*

Introduction

The Arab uprising began through streets protests in Tunisia in December 2010 and spilled over the neighbouring countries that had deposed secularist dictators in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya and looked to end up regimes across the region. International community showed cautious

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reaction towards it. Russia supports democracy and human rights values all around the world since the disintegration of Soviet Union. It supported Tunisians, Egyptians even Libyan peoples civil right of social change but in the case of Syria, an old and loyal ally of Russia, the policy turn out to be entirely different. It is backing Bashar al-Assad regime against whom Syrians have been struggling. Bashar al Assad is using force to suppress rebellions. It has been reported that about 200,000 people have been killed in Syria since the beginning of the country's uprising in March 2011.¹

Russia has vetoed three times the UN Security Council resolutions against the intervention in Syria apparently to protect the civilians. It shows radical change in Russian policy towards Syria. Mounting international pressure has failed to bring any flexibility in Russian policy. It seems that Arab uprising has stuck in Syria even though it has toppled authoritative rulers in other Arab countries within months. Now Russia has been more assertive in international politics. The logic behind Russian strong backing to Syria can be understood by taking vicissitudes of their about seven decades old relations.

Soviet-Syria Relations in the Bipolar World

The European powers exhausted by the war in 1945, began the gradual process of decolonization. French control over Syria and Lebanon was terminated, and Great Britain started to dismantle its mandate in Palestine. The age of imperialism was drawing to close. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union began expanding on all its peripheries: into Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East. The USSR assumed the new role of superpower with remarkable forcefulness and resiliency. The ideological disparity between the superpowers underscored the intense bipolarity of the new global system.²

Russia had always been interested in the eastern Mediterranean and its Arab nations for geopolitical, economic, and cultural reasons. The eastern parts of the Black Sea's coastline, which were still under Moscow's control, provide a waterway to the Mediterranean Sea, linking Russia to the Middle East, southern Europe, Africa and Asia. This waterway was crucial to Russia, and Moscow continued to view the countries located in the Eastern Mediterranean as necessary partners, even though they were not Russia's direct neighbour.³

¹ Sahner, C.C., *Syria's 'Blood Diamonds', A Nation's War On Culture*. In *The Wall Street Journal*, New York: September 8, 2014.

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² Taylor, A., *The Superpowers and the Middle East*. Syracuse University Press, New York 1991, p 20.

³ Kreutz, A., *Russia in the Middle East: Friend Or Foe?*. Greenwood Publishing Group, Westport 2007, p 11.

In the final years of World War II, Moscow established its diplomatic links with Syria in 1944, even before the country was formally recognized as an independent state on April 7, 1946. Syria was probably more important for Russians for two reasons. First, its geographical location provided a chance to outflank Turkey and Iraq, which were firmly in the western camp, secondly the Syrian communist party and its allies, had already acquired some influence in Syrian politics. But still, during the first decade after World War II, Moscow's relations with Damascus were cold. However, Stalin's death in March 1953 and Nikita Khrushchev's rise to power opened a new chapter in Soviet third world relations, including the Arab world and Syria. In the beginning two decades of Soviet-Arab relations Moscow considered Egypt its most important partner, but Syria was not neglected.⁴

Soviet Role in Arab-Israel Conflict

The creation of Israel, in the aftermath of World War II, had remained the core issue of the Arab world and Soviet involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict began since the birth of Israel on May 14, 1948. Joseph Stalin favoured Zionist movement in the Arab world and opted a pro-Zionist foreign policy; ostensibly believing that the newly born state would took on socialism and fastened the decline of British control in the Middle East. The Soviet Union with its partners cast a positive vote to the UN partition plan for Palestine in November 1947 that paved the way for an independent state of Israel.⁵

The Arab world rejected the creation of Israel in the heart of Arab soil and next day of its creation, May 15, their troops moved into Palestine. On third day May 17, the Soviet Union recognized Israel and contributed to the Israel's victory in the first Arab-Israel war. It provided Israel both military and diplomatic aid. Since Israel had the full support of the West, the USSR began reversing its alliance from 1955 onwards. It now supported the Arab Nationalism Movement and the states over which, what was seen as Western imperialism had established its control. The US had become the influential power in the region while the British and French influence was on the wane. Israel began to be seen as the mainstay of American policies in the Middle East. Moscow now opened its arms to the Arab world and its slogan was anti-imperialism and anti-Zionism. This greatly appealed to the Arab

⁴ Ibid., p 13.

⁵ Edwards, B., & Hinchcliffe, P., *Conflicts in the Middle East Since 1945*. Routledge, New York 2001, p 11.

countries.⁶ In the second Arab-Israel conflict in 1956 both super powers the US and USSR opposed the tripartite Franco-British-Israeli attack on Egypt.⁷

After each of Syria's major wars with Israel, Soviet involvement increased in the country. Following its stunning defeat in 1967, Syria was forced to rebuild its armed forces almost completely; a task that could be only accomplished with massive Soviet assistance and the investment seemed worthwhile for Moscow.⁸

The third Arab-Israel war 1967, left deep imprint in the Arab world and its politics. It is still impossible for Syria to get rid from the consequences of that war in which Israel seized the Golan Heights, the swath of Syria. As the war began Syria tried best to prevent Israel from capturing the Golan Heights, the juncture of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Israel. Though the Golan Heights had less than 1% of Syria's landmass and spread on only 690 square miles, it nevertheless possessed agricultural and water resources. After the war the Golan Heights became a symbol of Israeli aggression and a source of Syrian irredentism.⁹ Even today, the essence of Syrian foreign policy, as it has been for more than four decades, is the return of the Golan Heights to the June 4, 1967 line, the Syrian-Israeli border before the war commenced. Any Syrian leader cannot enter into a peace agreement with Israel without demanding the return of the Golan.¹⁰ The Soviet Union broke off diplomatic relations with Israel on 10 June to register displeasure with Israeli actions in the Golan and to make clear indication that Israel would not move further, specifically as the road to Damascus was lay wide open only some forty miles away from the Golan Heights.¹¹

The "Six Day War" did not end. Small-scale clashes continued along the Suez Canal, with the population of the cities along that water way evacuated. In March 1969, the Egyptian president Gamal Abdul Nasir declared a war of Attrition involving regular artillery barrages. The Soviets provided arms on a massive level that soon replaced the losses of 1967. For the first time, Soviet Union acquired naval facilities in Egyptian ports.¹²

After the war of Attrition, the USSR avoided a new Arab-Israeli war and a confrontation with the US. Following Nasser's sudden death, his successor

⁶ Imrana Begum, The Arab Uprising: Russian Disquiet on Western Involvement. In *Journal of European studies*, no. 29(2) , July 2013, University of Karachi: Area Study Centre for Europe, p.98.

⁷ Freedman, R., The Superpowers and the Middle East, in Allison, R., & Williams, P., (ed.), *Superpowers Competition and Crisis Prevention in the Third World*. Cambridge University Press, New York 1990, p 124.

⁸ Drysdale, A., & Himmebusch, R., *Syria and the Middle East Peace Process*. Council on Foreign Relations Press, New York 1991, p 153.

⁹ Shlaim, A., Israel: Poor Little Samson, in Shlaim, A., & Louis, W., (ed.), *The Arab-Israeli War: Origins and Consequences*. Cambridge University Press, New York 2012, p 11.

¹⁰ Shlaim, A., & Roger, W., (ed.), *The 1967 Arab-Israeli War: Origins and Consequences*. Cambridge University Press, New York 2012, p 79.

¹¹ Lesch, D.W., Playing With Fire, in Shlaim, A., & Roger, W., (ed.), *Ibid*, p 93.

¹² Perry, G., *The History of Egypt*. Greenwood Press, Westport 2004, p 108.

General Anwar Sadat started preparation of a new Arab coalition war against Israel during 1971 to 1973. The planning of Arab coalition war was an absolute secret without any Soviet support, while Syria undertook a massive Soviet supported military build-up to reconquer the Golan Heights.¹³

The fourth Arab-Israel war known as Yom Kippur War fought on October 6-26, 1973 to take back from Israel the Sinai desert and Golan Heights. It was a surprised two front attack by Egypt and Syria on the main and sacred Jewish holiday.¹⁴ During the Yom Kippur War, the USSR undertook its most ambitious international air and sea-lift of military supplies to Egypt and Syria (78,000 tons in total), replacing the heavy Arab combat losses with Soviet equipment taken directly from Soviet/Warsaw Pact depots, while other Arab states also provided weapons and financing. All efforts were outdone by the massive US air and sea-lift to Israel approximately 112, 395 tons in total as a US-USSR mediated UN cease-fire came into effect on October 22.¹⁵

Since 1973 there has been no major Arab-Israel war endangering world stability and increasing the risk of confrontation between the two superpowers such as there was in 1956, 1967, and 1973, this is certainly because the Lebanese territory served as a limited zone of confrontation between regional and international forces aiming at ensuring, restoring or developing their hegemony over this highly strategic region of the world. That is why Israel, by invading Lebanon in 1982 and besieging Beirut had broken the rules of a cruel but delimited game.¹⁶

Soviet Strategic Loses in Egypt: Compensated by Syria

The Soviet–Egyptian relations deteriorated with the rise of Sadat in Egypt. The expulsion of the Soviet military advisers (nearly 15,000-20,000) from Egypt in 1972 gave a new turn to the Soviet-Syria relations. In the revised Soviet foreign policy, Syria assumed greater importance for Moscow as some of the strategic losses in Egypt were to be compensated by facilities in Syria. To maintain good rapport the Soviets undertook many development projects in Syria i.e. the widening of Syrian ports, built air facilities, and increased the number of advisers in the country. Deliveries from a new, large arms deal signed in July 1972, began to arrive quite ostentatiously in

¹³ Rimanelli, M., Origins of Arab-Israeli Conflicts in the “Greater Middle East”, in Gardner, H., & Kobtzeff, O.,(ed.). *The Ashgate Research Companion to War: Origins and Prevention*. Farnham 2012, p 223.

¹⁴ Ibid, p 224.

¹⁵ Ibid, p 225.

¹⁶ Georges Corn, G., Myths And Realities Of The Lebanese Conflict, in Shehadi, N., & Mills, D., (ed.), *Lebanon: A History of Conflict and Consensus*. I.B. Tauris, London 1988, p 268.

the autumn of 1972 as Moscow strove, in propaganda as well, to prove that its relations with the Arab world were a closer to ever, despite the falling out with Egypt.¹⁷ Following the Arab defeat in Yom Kippur War on March 22, 1976, the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union signed in 1971 was formally abrogated by Egypt, ending two decades of close Soviet-Egyptian ties.

Now the Soviets began to place greater reliance on their ties with Syria to maintain their hand in the military confrontation with Israel. But Syria did not offer the USSR increased use of military facilities to compensate for the loss of those in Egypt; Assad refused to sign a treaty of friendship and cooperation with the USSR; and Damascus took position far from the Soviet line on several important issues. Even, after the 1973 war, relations improved between Washington and Damascus.¹⁸

For many years Hafez al Assad guarded Syrian independence by refusing to enter into a friendship and cooperation treaty of the type negotiated by Moscow with Egypt in 1971 and in Iraq in 1972 as well as number of other third world states.¹⁹

The most serious Soviet-Syrian differences grew in connection with the Syrian conflict with the Palestine Liberation Organization in Lebanon in 1976. Syrian intermittent intervention began in Lebanon from January–June 1976²⁰ after this conflict Assad regime was becoming increasingly isolated once again in the Arab world, mainly because of its politics in Lebanon. The Syrian move was viewed in Moscow as a sample of Assad's aspirations or perhaps pretensions for expansion of Syrian power.

Syria felt vulnerable due to the Egyptian-Israeli peace Treaty signed in 1979 in the aftermath of 1973 Arab-Israel war. The treaty virtually eliminated Israel's western front. Consequently the Assad regime, reluctant to sign any friendship agreement with the USSR, signed a truce of Friendship and Cooperation with Moscow in October 1980.²¹ The Friendship Treaty was considered some achievement for Soviet policy against the American success of Camp David and the Egyptian-Israeli peace Treaty. It also helped to counter Muslim criticism in the wake of the December 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Indeed Syria was most cooperative in opposing condemnation and spearheading support for the Soviets with regard to Afghanistan. Syria went far ahead in Soviet favour that it abstained in the UN vote condemning the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan and it also

¹⁷ Golan, G., *Soviet policies in the Middle East: From World War II to Gorbachev*. Cambridge University Press, New York 1990, p 146.

¹⁸ Laird, R., & Hoffmann, E., *Soviet Foreign Policy in a Changing World*. Aldine Publishing Company, New York 1986, p 277.

¹⁹ Golan, 1990, p 145.

²⁰ Ibid, p 151.

²¹ Ibid, p 153.

refused to attend the OIC summit devoted to the same subject on the grounds that Syria's priorities lay with the struggle against Zionism.²²

Early in the 1980s, the Middle East turned into a focal point of the USSR-US geostrategic rivalry. The US newly elected President Ronald Reagan had apprehensions about Soviet furrows in the waters of the Mediterranean. He challenged the USSR in the Middle East, and Moscow was prepared to meet the challenge.²³ For many years the Soviet military raised the issue of setting up a base in Syria. Damascus had deftly evaded the question and the decision was postponed, but during negotiations on November 8, 1980 in Moscow, President Hafez al- Assad unexpectedly gave his consent for a Soviet military base in Syria. In the mid of February 1981, the Soviet delegation headed by the commander-in-chief of the Soviet navy reached Syria and carefully explored the entire coastline and selected an spacious area between Latakia 77, and Tartus. The spot was perfect for a naval base, and it had an area behind it to build an airfield for base air cover.

It was an obvious fact that Soviet military could not compete with the US in number of bases in the Mediterranean Sea. However, setting up a base with an airfield in Tartus would provide a number of strategic advantages to the Soviet Union.²⁴ Syria's main concern was to guard itself with Soviet missiles in case of a war with Israel. However, Leonid Brezhnev was growing increasingly frail and he had little interest in bases. After the invasion of Afghanistan, he generally avoided radical changes in Soviet politics even the creation of Soviet military bases in Syria were not discussed at Politburo meetings.²⁵

Military and Economic Ties Between Soviet Union and Syria

The creation of Israel in the Arab lands sowed the seeds of insecurity among the regional countries. The Arab countries had an enemy with strong US and Western backing and to counter Israel, they needed arms. During the cold war period the two super powers were the promising source of military and economic aid and both were searching for satellite states to protect their military, economic and strategic interest in certain regions. In that crucial period Syria was the first Arab country to purchase arms from the Soviet Union. Since 1954, the USSR continued a close relationship with Syria through military weapons transfer. Moscow also promised Soviet support in

²² Ibid, p154.

²³ Grinevsky, O., *The Crisis that Didn't Erupt: The Soviet-American Relationship 1980-1983*, in Skinner, K., *Turning points in Ending the Cold War*. Hoover Institution Press Publication, 2007, p 77.

²⁴ Ibid, p 77- 78.

²⁵ Ibid, p 79.

the spring of 1955 when it was being subjected to pressure to join the Baghdad pact.²⁶

Another arm deal between Syria and USSR was known to have been concluded in early 1956. By the end of the same year, and with no connection to the Suez war-----Syria, under the terms of the deal, had received from the Soviet bloc some 100 medium tanks, 100 armoured personnel carriers, 50-100 self-propelled guns, and about 100 other guns of various calibres. About 20 MiG-15 aircraft ordered by Syria were delivered to Egypt for assembly and then dispatched to Syria, and bombs and rockets for these MiGs were (possibly) delivered to Syria directly. The total value of this arms deals was estimated to be about Syria £ 20 million.²⁷

The Soviet Foreign minister visited Syria in 1956, where he had talks with Syrian leaders on the subject of Soviet economic aid to Syria, including aid in development projects, food storage facilities, and construction of a railway from Latakia to Jazira, as well as several air fields, and a Euphrates Dam.²⁸ In the mid of same year, the Syrian Eastern Development Corporation was established for the purpose of handling “trade with Soviet bloc countries as well as to undertake the construction of industrial plants, develop shipping transportation agencies, and provide for other commercial services.”²⁹ The Government of the USSR also agreed in a friendly fashion to examine the question of granting credit to the Syrian Government to pay for the work connected with research and drawing up plans, supplying equipment and the expenses for sending specialists and providing other sorts of technical aid. The Soviet government declared that economic and technical cooperation will be carried out without any conditions of a political or analogous nature, on a basis of equality and reciprocal economic advantage, of non-interference in internal affairs and complete respect for the national dignity and sovereignty of the Syrian Republic.³⁰

The establishment of United Arab Republic (UAR) on February 1, 1958, opposed Soviet penetration into Syria, a country that earlier “had moved closest to the Soviet Union. Moscow welcomed the new state as a step forward towards “further strengthening of the unity of the Arab peoples. On the other hand, when Syria seceded from the UAR on September 29, 1961, the USSR was the first great power to recognize the re-establishment of the Syrian state only nine days after the coup. The new regime was friendly to

²⁶ Ro’I, Y., *From Encroachment to Involvement: A Documentary Study of Soviet Policy in the Middle East, 1945-1973*. Keter Publishing House, Jerusalem 1974, p 227.

Theodore H. Friedgut, T.H., The Soviet Union in the Middle East: Regional policies of a Maturing Global Power 1945-1974, in Israel Stockman-Shomron, *Israel, The Middle East, and the Great Powers*, Jerusalem: Korean Publishers Jerusalem, 1984, p.128.

²⁷ Ginat, R., *Syria and the Doctrine of Arab Neutralism: From Independence to Dependence*. Sussex Academic Press, Eastbourne 2005, p 166.

²⁸ Ro’I., 1974, p 227.

²⁹ Ginat., 2005, p 156.

³⁰ Ro’I., 1974, p 229.

Moscow but on March 8, 1963, a new coup brought the Ba'ath Party to power. Soviet assistance increased greatly when more radical wings of the Ba'ath Party won power in two subsequent coups in January 1965 and February 23, 1966. The radical neo-Ba'athists declared socialism as their goal and intended to modernize the economy, to build a strong army and to oppose the Western powers as well as Israel. The neo-Ba'athists had strong backing of Moscow and in the same year it offered Damascus new credit amounting to \$ 120 million for infrastructure development.³¹ More economic and military assistance was coming to Syria, and until President Hafez al Assad took office in the eleventh month of 1970, Syria was seen as the most radical Arab nation with the closest ties to Moscow. Between 1970 and the advent of Gorbachev's perestroika³² in the late 1980s, Syria greatly benefited from an uninterrupted stream of Soviet military equipment and a tremendous variety of civil goods and services.³³

After the Israeli intrusion of Lebanon in 1982, the number of Soviet tanks, fighter planes, artillery, and surface to air missiles in the Syrian arsenal expanded by about one-third. Syria received advanced weapons, including SS-21 missiles in 1983, just one year after their deployment in Soviet bloc countries. This sophisticated military hardware brought in an additional 2000 Soviet advisers and technicians to train and assist the Syrian army, which had doubled to 400,000 men.³⁴

It was exceptional that when most of the countries condemned Soviet occupation in Afghanistan, Bashir al Assad was among the few world leaders, who firmly stood with the Soviet Union during 1979-1989. Indeed, his act reflected that he joined the Soviet camp of his own volition and not as a satellite. The Soviet strong support partially integrated Syrian military into the Soviet system, particularly with regard to navy, air force, and short-range ballistic missiles. Because of the strength of Soviet-Syrian defence relations, in 1985 the US Department of Defence dubbed Syria "the centrepiece of Soviet Middle East Policy." To maintain balance in its relation the Soviet Union began trading with Syria of second-rate goods as a source of safe cultural products.³⁵

In fact relationships between countries cannot remain same they change according to the domestic, regional and global circumstances, same

³¹ Kreutz., 2007, p 14.

³² A political movement for reformation within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union during the 1980s

³³ Kreutz., 2007, p 15.

³⁴ Saunders, B., *The United States and Arab Nationalism: The Syrian Case, 1953-1960*. Greenwood Publishing Group, Westport 1996, p 90.

³⁵ Pipes, D., *Syria Beyond the Peace Process*. The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Washington 1996, p 7.

happened with the Soviet-Syria relations. The USSR long involvement in Afghanistan in the decade of 1980s brought economic turmoil in the Soviet Union. Economically, confronted with its own resources crisis, the USSR from the late 1980s insisted on the repayment of Syria's largely military debt which over the years had reached some \$ 10-12 bn.³⁶ In 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev's ascension to power brought a noticeable change in Soviet policy towards Syria as well as Middle East. Moscow decided to improve relations with Israel and play a meaningful role to resolve Arab-Israeli conflict. The new policies were unflappably received in Damascus.³⁷ Distant Soviet-Syria relations in Gorbachev's period produced a gradual reformation of Syrian foreign policy, it reduced rely on Moscow and enlist the support of regional states like Iran and radical Lebanese and Palestinian groups.³⁸ Since the decline of the Soviet Union, Russian foreign policy reduced support for Syria on the basis of global political considerations.

In 1990, politically and economically debilitated, Soviet Union bowed out of the race with the US and Soviet president Gorbachev gave the US President George Bush his backing in the Allies' efforts to end the Iraq occupation of Kuwait.³⁹ The Syrian regime was the first in the Arab world to condemn the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990 and asked for the immediate withdrawal of Iraqi forces.⁴⁰ It was difficult for the Assad government to participate in a war against another Arab country, particularly against Iraq, whose president appeared to be the one Arab leader standing up to Israeli intransigence. In that Gulf war Syria fought alongside Americans who had been castigated over the years as imperialists and allies of Zionism.⁴¹

Russia-Syrian Formal Ties in the Unipolar World

The disintegration of Soviet Union confined the strategic significance of Russia and abandoned its status of superpower in international politics. In the unipolar world Russian foreign policy reduced support for Syria on the basis of global political considerations.⁴² In Syria the end of the Cold war exercised a greater influence on political change than elsewhere largely because of material and moral support from the pre-Gorbachev Soviet Union

³⁶ Hale, W., & Kienle, E., (ed.), *After the Cold War: Security and Democracy in Africa and Asia*. I. B. Tauris, London 1997, p 205.

³⁷ Ginat, 2005, p 231.

³⁸ Goodarzi, J., *Syria and Iran: Diplomatic Alliance And Power Politics In The Middle East*. I. B. Tauris Publishers, London 2006, p 210.

³⁹ Edwards, B., & Hinchcliffe, P., *Conflicts n the Middle East Since 1945*. Routledge, London 2001, p 34.

⁴⁰ Ismael, T., *The Gulf and the New World Order: International Relations Of the Middle East*. University Press of Florida, Gainesville 1994, p. 385.

⁴¹ Ibid., p 386.

⁴² Hale, W., & Kievl, E.,(ed.), 1997, p 205.

had enabled the regime to ignore demands for the respect of Human Rights in particular. In their universal definition Human Rights were not a priority in the old USSR.⁴³ Syrian relations with the Soviets were now only a matter of formality. The military and economic aid provided by the former USSR was no more provided by its successor, i.e. Russia. However the Russian submarine base Tartus still maintained its existence and Russian generals continued to be the military and strategic consultants of the Syrian army.⁴⁴ Founder of the “new” Russia, Boris Yeltsin had presided over an erratic, messy, incomplete transition from the failing Soviet system to an entirely different society struggling to implement democratic and free market reforms.⁴⁵

During Yeltsin period Russia adopted a pro-Western line and deliberated Syria, Iraq and Iran-old allies ----to be more of an economic burden than a benefit. However, Boris Yeltsin mended ties with Syria’s neighbouring countries---Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey but Syria was kept at a distance and viewed with more suspicion.⁴⁶ The Syrian leadership realized that the USSR was moving in a different direction and it was not going to assume its earlier role as Damascus’ patron and protector any longer. The Russian arms supply to Syria was declining steadily and Hafiz Al-Assad changed his country’s foreign policy to look for new allies and sources of assistance. On the other hand, earlier ties with Moscow did not disappear completely; in fact, eventually resumed in a different form.⁴⁷

Russian Re-Emergence on Global Stage in Putin’s Period

Russia re-emerged in global politics when the former member of KGB* Vladimir Putin took the rein of Russia in 2000. He fastened Russian economic recovery. Under Putin, state coffers brimmed over with oil and natural gas profits, the middle class begin to grow, improvements were made in the health care and education system, and Russia actually resumed its position as a major player in international affairs in the second term of

⁴³ Ibid., p 217.

⁴⁴ Aghayev, E., Historical Background and the Present State of the Russian-Syrian Relations. In *European Research*, no.35(11-3), 2012. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/3492823/Historical_Background_and_the_Present_State_of_the_Russian-Syrian_Relations

⁴⁵ Thompson, J., *Russia and the Soviet Union: An historical introduction from the Kievan State to the Present*. 6th ed., Westview Press, Boulder 2009, p 579.

⁴⁶ Ginat, 2005, p 232.

⁴⁷ Kreutz, 2007, p 18.

* Komiter Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti or The Committee for State Security.

Putin's presidency.⁴⁸ The distant relations between Russia and Syria owing to Russian economic crisis of 80s and Syrian huge military debts to Russia revived in that period. He began attributing an importance to Syria when he uncluttered Russia and began a strategy of return to the old days.⁴⁹ The solution to the debt question with Syria undoubtedly had to wait until Russia was far enough along in its economic recovery that collecting debts became less important for Moscow than reasserting a position of influence in a neighbouring region of strategic importance.⁵⁰ After a long period of coolness dating back to the closing years of the Soviet Union, Russia-Syria relations sharply improved in 2005 owing to Moscow's desire to regain its Soviet-era position as a leading arm seller in the Middle East. As mentioned earlier that the Soviet Union was the main arm supplier to Syria in the cold war period and due to these supplies Syria's debt swelled around \$13.4 billion by 1990 and in the post-cold war period there was a constant demand by Russia for the recompense of debt. The issue was settled when Russia overcame its economic crisis in Putin's tenure. In May 2005 through an agreement signed between Russian finance minister with his Syrian counterpart, Russia wrote off 73 Percent of \$13.4 billion Syria's debt.⁵¹ According to another agreement signed in 2008, Russia agreed to sell MiG-29 fighter aircraft to Syria.

Vladimir Putin presented its challenge to the US and wider Western 'hegemony' in the international system in terms of principles, legality, and compliance with the UN Charter system. Putin called for the democratization on interstate relations, which essentially amounted to a levelling down of hegemonic power.⁵² Russia attained this position with the economic and political recovery. In 2008 Russia was one of the world's most rapidly growing economies, had paid down its foreign debt, and was rebuilding its military from the chaos into which it fell during the 1990s. Now Russia became more uncomfortable partner for the US than was the weak, cowed Russia of the 1990s.⁵³ Russia was keen to strengthen its

⁴⁸ Saunders, R., & Strukov, V., *Historical Dictionary of the Russian Federation*. The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Maryland 2010, p 2.

⁴⁹ Aghayev, E., Historical Background and the Present State of the Russian-Syrian Relations. In *European Research*, no.35(11-3), 2012. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/3492823/Historical_Background_and_the_Present_State_of_the_Russian-Syrian_Relations

⁵⁰ Donaldson, R., & Noguee, J., *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems, Enduring Interests*. 4th ed., M.E.Sharpe, New York 2009, p 313.

⁵¹ Freedman, R., Can Russia be a partner for NATO in the middle east? in Braun, A., (ed.), *NATO-Russia Relations in the Twenty-First Century*, Routledge, New York 2008, p 148.

⁵² Allison, R., *Russia, the West, and Military Intervention*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2013, p 203.

⁵³ Mankoff, J., *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Maryland 2009, p 132.

muscles. Its only naval base at Tartus was a symbolic and largely vacant logistic facility, certainly, a remembrance of former Soviet Union.⁵⁴

By the finale of Vladimir Putin administration in 2008, Russia renewed its relations with the states that opposed US interests and the US believed that they were posing threat to global stability, such as Iran, Syria, Venezuela and Hamas.⁵⁵ Russia signed fresh arms agreements with Syria in 2007-2010 and their value was more than doubled — to \$4.7 billion from \$2.1 billion.⁵⁶ Putin re-elected as a president for third term in 2012. He made it clear on many occasions that Russia aspires to traditional great-power status and actions, and Putin became a leading voice in opposition to the US dominance at institutions such as the UNO.⁵⁷

Russia's Response to the Arab Spring

The self-immolation of Tunisian citizen Mohamed Bouazizi opened a new chapter in the Arab world that united populaces against their authoritative rulers. The masses raised the slogan that “the people want to bring down the regime.” The mass movement known as Arab uprising successfully toppled autocrats in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. The Russian reaction on the Arab uprising was not very different from the west. In most of the countries where the uprising succeeded, people elected Islamists, allied to the Muslim Brotherhood.⁵⁸ A relatively peaceful movement in Tunisia and Egypt posed little risk to Russian interests, and enabled Russia to show a pro-democracy, pro-populist voice in the international platform.

However, Moscow's response was not similar to the West when uprising spilled over Libya where Russia had deep investment in various projects. Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi strongly resisted rebellions and appeared on the edge of crushing them. It seemed that the defeat of rebels was not acceptable for the planners of Arab uprising. The west, vigilant on the Libyan situation, showed worries about human rights violations and began discussions about the possibility of military intervention against Qadhafi. It was certainly too much for the Russian leadership. Medvedev, the then

⁵⁴ Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1559443/After-claiming-the-Pole-Russia-looks-south.html>

⁵⁵ Stent, A., *Restoration and Revolution in Putin's Foreign policy*. In Sakwa, R.,(ed.), *Power and policy in Putin's Russia*. Routledge, New York 2009, p 218.

⁵⁶ Herszenhorn, D., *For Syria, Reliant on Russia for Weapons and Food, Old Bonds Run Deep*. In *The New York Times*, February 18, 2012.

⁵⁷ Jackson, R., *Global politics in the 21st century*. Cambridge University Press, New York 2013, p 141.

⁵⁸ Begum, I., *The Arab Uprising: Russian Disquiet on Western Involvement*. In *Journal of European Studies*, no.29(2), July 2013, Area Study Centre For Europe, University of Karachi, Karachi, p 110.

President of Russia forewarned about the upsurge in power of “fanatics” in the Middle East and also warned of “fires for decades and the spread of extremism” there. Vladimir Putin, the Prime Minister of Russia also stated in a same manner that “external interference” could lead to the rise of Islamists, and the rise of Islamists in North Africa could adversely affect other regions, including Russia’s North Caucasus.⁵⁹ Although Russia had invested billions of dollars in arms, oil and construction agreements in Libya but to somehow gave a green signal for western military intervention in Libya by abstaining from a vote on a United Nations Security Council resolution in March 2011. Despite that as the NATO forces entered in Libya, Moscow continuously accused them for air strikes and exceeding their mandate to protect civilians, as they were favouring anti-Gadhafi forces in the civil war.⁶⁰ Human Rights Watch entirely ignored the wish of the Libyan authorities to investigate the brutal killing of Qadhafi on October 20, 2011 near Sirte and punishment to the responsible.⁶¹

Russian Strong Support to Syria: A Loyal Ally in the Arab World

The successful dethroning of Qaddafi in Libya by NATO made Western countries more enthusiastic about their assertive role in the Arab uprising. After Libya the eyes of international community turned towards Syria where people stood up against Bashar al Assad. Russia could not allow the west to treat Assad as they treated Muammar Gaddafi, a long-time Moscow ally. Since the uprising began in Syria Russia explicitly supported the regime that remained a loyal ally of Russia after Second World War and with whom it has smooth political, military, and economic ties. Syria remained loyal to Russia when Egypt went in the US camp in 1970s. It is not merely an incidence that China and Russia did not approve NATO and the U.S. to intervene in Syria's internal matters. Both countries disappointed with western role in Libya, did not cast their vote for the resolution, which could formally endorse sanctions, but actually could give right to kill Syrian leadership.⁶²

The Assad’s use of chemical weapons against the rebellion brought the Middle East at the verge of great conflict. The US was determined to attack Syria against the mass killing of civilian through suspected use of chemical weapons that reportedly killed about 1, 429 people in Damascus suburb on August 21, 2013. Russia successfully blocked international action against

⁵⁹ Katz, M., *Russia and the Arab Spring*. Middle East Institute, April 03, 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.mei.edu/content/russia-and-arab-spring>, accessed on 21/ 11/2013.

⁶⁰ *The Moscow Times*, October 21, 2011, Retrieved from <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/medvedev-hopes-for-democracy-in-post-gadhafi-libya/445983.html>, accessed on 2/11/2013.

⁶¹ Retrieved from http://english.pravda.ru/world/africa/22-10-2012/122531-muammar_gaddafi-0/

⁶² Retrieved from http://english.pravda.ru/world/africa/22-10-2012/122531-muammar_gaddafi-0/

Syria. In the G-20 summit held in St-Petersburg in the same month, Mr. Obama called for immediate military action against Syria but Mr. Putin used the summit to publicly endorse the conspiracy theory that Syria's alleged chemical weapons strike was actually a provocation planned by the rebels in hope of getting additional backing from their external backers.⁶³ The usage of chemical weapons has been prohibited by the 1952 Geneva protocol and considered war crime according to the International Criminal Court. The UN Security Council can refer such war crimes to the international criminal court even if the accused are citizens of a state that has not ratified the court's statute.

Moscow averted the planned US-led bombing by persuading Damascus to eventually destroy the chemical weapons and be a full member of the Organization for the prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Syria followed Russian advice by ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention in October 2013 and agreed to the destruction of chemical weapons under the supervision of OPCW. Furthermore, the US and Russia reached to an agreement for the elimination of Syria's chemical weapon stockpiles by the mid-2014.⁶⁴ The agreement was a high diplomatic achievement of Moscow in the sense that it diverted international focus from the bloody civil war to the destruction of chemical weapons in Syria.

The Syrian chemical weapons destroyed under the auspices of OPCW and the UN in August 2014⁶⁵ but suspicions and doubts prevailed in the Middle Eastern and global politics.

Russia remained an important actor in the greater Middle East politics because of a permanent member of the UN Security Council; it can use veto power to block resolutions opposed by the countries Moscow wishes to shield. The political lever became important since the US and many Western European countries found it domestically prudent and often essential to obtain a UN seal of approval for peacekeeping operations that involve their troops under a NATO umbrella. Moscow's veto power, nevertheless, one of the few restraints it has on Washington's ambition to manage developments in the Balkans and the Middle East---- areas of residual interest to Russian leaders.⁶⁶ The Russian veto power in the UN Security Council lingered a constraint but the presence of Russian naval base at Tartus remained a

⁶³ *The Washington Times*, September 9, 2013, Retrieved from, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/sep/9/russias-reset-cold-war-no-longer-water-under-the-b/?page=all>

⁶⁴ *The Guardian*, September 14, 2013. Retrieved from, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/14/syris-crisis-us-russia-chemical-weapons-deal>

⁶⁵ Neff, T.G., Declared Syrian Chemical Weapons Stockpiles Now Completely Destroyed, in *The Washington Post*, August 18, 2014.

⁶⁶ Kreutz, 2007, p. 13.

matter of concern for the West. It has been reported by many English newspapers on June 26, 2013 that Russia has vacated the Tartus base.⁶⁷ However, on the very next day Russian defence ministry categorically refuted those reports and stated that Tartus was still an official base for Russian vessels in the Mediterranean and carrying their routine task.⁶⁸

The Arab uprising remained a centre of global politics from the time when it entered in Tunisia and its successful resistance in Syria since March 2011. The upsurge of Russia forces in Ukraine shifted the global focal point and pushed the Syrian conflict in the background. The Ukrainian crisis became more important for the world than Syrian unrest.⁶⁹

On the other hand the Syrian President had repeatedly warned of the threat of Islamist extremists to Syria and the wider region since the beginning of the uprising. The same concerns had been shown by the Russian President and Prime Minister. The Western powers initially dismissed Mr. Assad and Putin, but became increasingly concerned by the rise of Islamic State (IS) and al-Qaeda's affiliate al-Nusra Front.⁷⁰ Both of them pose a great threat to the US and Middle East peace.

The western support of rebellions or anti-government forces during the Arab spring resulted in the emergence of Daesh. Daesh is an Arabic term for the Islamic state (IS) group.⁷¹ The rise of Islamic State (IS), the Jihadist militant group that has seized large parts of Syria and Iraq, has sent shockwaves around the Middle East and North African region and beyond. The IS emerged as a combined enemy of the US, Russia and Syrian government.⁷²

Since the beginning of insurgency in Syria the West had a great pressure on president Bash-al-Assad to surrender power, who was going to complete his presidential tenure in 2014. In spite of the demands he contested Presidential elections held on June 3, 2014 and won landslide victory securing 88.7 percent of the vote. The electoral victory gave him a third seven year term in office despite a raging civil war in his country.⁷³ The Assad's government has also been suffered heavy losses against the Islamic State, which killed hundreds of soldiers and pro-government fighters in recent months as it overran oil fields and military bases.⁷⁴

⁶⁷ *The Guardian*, June 26, 2014. Retrieved from, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/26/russia-withdraws-personnel-syria>, accessed on October 12, 2014.

⁶⁸ *Pravada Ru*, Russia not withdrawing its base from Syria's Tartus, 27.06.13. Retrieved from, http://english.pravda.ru/news/russia/27-06-2013/124965-russia_tartus-0/#.VCmqJfmSz3w

⁶⁹ *The Moscow Times*, Aril 10, 2014.

⁷⁰ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29074514>.

⁷¹ *Dawn*, September 27, 2014.

⁷² *The Moscow Times*, Middle East threat Must Unite Russia and US, October 7, 2014.

⁷³ Retrieved from, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/06/bashar-al-assad-re-elected-syrian-president-20146419457810751.html> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27675343>

⁷⁴ *Dawn*, Karachi: September 7, 2014.

To eliminate the terrorist threat the U.S. decided to wage a war against the IS network without getting approval from the UN Security Council. It attacked the Islamic State network in Iraq in August 2014 and afterwards in Syria with its five Arab allies including Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates on September 22, 2014.⁷⁵ Although the IS also emerged as a threat for Russia but it responded over the US attack on Syria in a definite displeasure and warned the US for violating international laws which would further deteriorate the situation. Putin firmly stated that such strikes should be carried out with the approval of the UN Security Council and the consent of the Syrian government.⁷⁶ It is noteworthy that International Law requires warning before attacking a country.

The Russia-Syria relations that began in 1944 remained distinctive for number of factors: the first and perhaps the most important factor, is the Syrian army, still largely equipped with Russian weapons, needed a continuous supply of spare parts and repairs by Russian experts. Due to both political and strategic reasons Syria also found it difficult to buy new weapons in the west or Far East and consequently tried to get them from Russia.

The second reason concerned the huge Syrian debt estimated at \$7.11 billion. The timing and forms of the debt's repayment has been a constant subject of Russian Syrian negotiations.

The third factor is Moscow's desire to play a significant role in the Arab-Israel "peace process", and knowing that the Arab (Palestinian)-Israeli track had been was outside its power and influence, wanted affirmation at the less politically sensitive Syria-Israeli dimension of the "Peace Process". A Russian analyst noted that if Russia succeeded in bringing about peace between Jerusalem and Damascus, it would boost his country's prestige and crisis-prone Russia liked this scenario. Last but not least, there are deep-seated ties between Syrian and Russian leaders and, Damascus has been powerful friends in Moscow who proved to be very helpful in the continuity of mutual cooperation despite ideological and geopolitical change.⁷⁷ Besides the above mentioned reasons there has been a soft influence of Russia in Syria because of the intermarriages of Syrian males with Russian females.

⁷⁵ Demirjian, K., Russia Condemns U.S. Airstrikes Against Islamic State in Syria. In *The Washington Post*, September 24, 2014. Retrieved from, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/russia-condemns-us-airstrikes-against-islamic-state-in-syria/2014/09/23/de639dc6-42f4-11e4-b437-1a7368204804_story.html

⁷⁶ Quinn, A., Russia Slams U.S. Air Strikes Against Islamic State in Syria. In *The Moscow Times*, September 23, 2014. Retrieved from, <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/russia-slams-u-s-air-strikes-against-islamic-state-in-syria/507661.html>

⁷⁷ Kreutz, 2007, p 19.

Russia's Soft Influence on Syria

Experts of Russia-Syria relations found another reason for their intimate relation which is beyond the politics. Syria is important for Russia owing to its economic, geo-political and strategic interests including arms agreements sum of \$700 million a year as well as a little port in the Mediterranean Sea established in the cold war period by the Soviet Union now the Russian's only military base. Apart from this a human factor is also involved in their relations that have a history of past 50 years when social contacts began among the young generation encountered in colleges. Currently, there are certain number of people in government ministries or corporate headquarters in Syria who passed their 20s in Russia and many of them married Russian females. Consequently their children brought up by Russian speaking mothers. In Syrian elite circles influence of Russian wives can be felt easily that is apparently soft but actually strong influence.

Syria has Russian population owing to the policies planned in 1963, when the socialist Baath Party took the reign of Syria. In the meantime Moscow launched a scholarship program to the top students from Asia, Africa and Latin America. The foreign students got education with their Russian classmates, soon their association turned to friendly relations and evenings were spent together. The Soviet Union had a clear objective, to establish international pro-Soviet intellectual elite class.⁷⁸ During 40 years of Assad family's autocratic rule thousands of Syrian military officers and educated professionals had been studied in Russia. Most of them were funded by the government. The educational and training programs resulted in marriages and mixed families.⁷⁹ In the past the Soviet collapse in December 1991 also followed a wave of intermarriages, as young Soviet females found a better escape from economic decline.

As the civil war in Syria seems close to a diplomatic solution, there are concerns over the future of about 30,000 Russian citizens mainly women and children living there. Moscow has encountered such an issue when Soviet disintegration left Russian citizens stranded. But that issue was not aggravated at this level. Particularly in the era of social media, when matters can be discussed everywhere only earn embarrassment to Moscow. The most delicate issue is that after 50 years of intermarriages it is difficult to draw a line between who is Russian and who is not, if the line exists at all.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Barry, E., Russians and Syrians, Allied by History and Related by Marriage. In *The New York Times*, July 1, 2012.

⁷⁹ Peel, M., in Damascus & Clover, C., in Moscow, Syria and Russia's "Special Relationship", Middle East and North Africa, July 9, 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e64a3076-c9b2-11e1-a5e2-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2lefPY6RG> on 28/11/13.

⁸⁰ Barry, in *The New York Times*, July 1, 2012.

Conclusion

The Soviet Union established diplomatic relations with Syria a year before the end of World War II. Some divergence has been observed in their relations for a short period of time during cold war period; however, they have never remained completely cut off. Both countries supported each other at the time of international pressure and isolation whether it be the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan or the uprising in Syria. The distant relations during the post- cold war period were decently bridged in the second tenure of Vladimir Putin by writing off Syria's 73 percent debt. Russia was able to do so because of its remarkable economic development and the wish to revive old relations.

Since the fall of bi-polar world, the world affairs have been settled unilaterally by the sole super power----- the US. However, after two decades of domination Russia, a former rival of the US, became able to balance its hegemony. In Syrian crisis Russia has emerged as a strong state having ability to play a decisive role in international politics, armed with a clear strategy over the world issues. After the signing of Camp David Accord between Egypt and Israel in late 1970s owing to the US mediation, Russia also wished to play a significant role in the Middle East politics. The Russian desire has been satisfied in the recent Arab uprising in which Russia emerged stronger than the US. Furthermore, Russia also justifies that in Egypt and Libya after the fall of regimes, life turned chaotic and it might be worst in the post Bashar al Assad Syria because of the sectarian diversity and spread of extremism. Russian stratagem has also proved to be far-sighted specifically over the issue of chemical weapons used by Syrian government on its civilians. Syrian readiness of the destruction of chemical weapons was another triumph of Russia. The global eyes turned towards the Ukrainian crisis by the beginning of 2014 but Syrian issue remained alive. Late on the armed victories of the Islamic State became a common threat for Russia, the U.S. and Syria. Again at this juncture Russia emphasized that behind any action against the Islamic State the US should take approval of the UN Security Council. Now Russia has a strong standing in international politics. It has earned a reputation of maintaining relations with old allies and Syria is an example. There is general uncertainty and insecurity in the world and the recent global developments require greater cooperation against militancy, respect of international organizations and support of legitimate governments.

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INDIAN FACTOR IN PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS

Tehseena Usman*

Abstract

India-Pakistan rivalry in Afghanistan is not a new phenomenon. In fact, it is deep rooted in history and accentuated by post-1947 developments. Ever since partition of the Indian subcontinent, India and Pakistan have been jockeying for power and influence in Afghanistan. Historically, Pakistan has always viewed Afghanistan's close relations with India as a major security threat. India, as an arch rival, is vying to draw Afghanistan in its sphere of influence. On the other hand, Pakistan as the smaller country desires to realize its national security objectives by forging closer links with its immediate western neighbor, Afghanistan. The article begins by tracing the origins of Pak-India animosity and competing interests in Afghanistan. This is followed by dissecting post-Taliban India-Pakistan tussle for greater economic and political clout in the latter. The paper is, therefore, timely and topical as it analyzes India-Pakistan involvement in Afghanistan. This could be instrumental in encouraging regional based approach for ushering peace and stability in the war- torn region. Resultantly, this could set the stage for some positive developments in the tense and strained Pakistan-Afghanistan relations.

Research Method

The research relies on descriptive analytical method to analyse different issues, events and development regarding the foreign policy stances of two arch rivals towards Afghanistan which directly impacts Pak-Afghan Relations. The Indian factor is very significant when studying Pak-Afghan relations. Therefore, different underlying factors have been interpreted which is stirring conflict in the pursuit of their conflicting objectives regarding Afghanistan.

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Introduction

Since independence Pak-Afghan relations have been impacted by Indian threat perception, which made security an important determinant of Pakistan's foreign policy. Security dilemma created mistrust between Pakistan and India, which impacted Pak-Afghan relations and highlighted quotient of mistrust in their bilateral ties. The security perception of Pakistan evolved by the experiences of freedom movement during which much of the blood was shed; strengthened the belief that India had not acknowledge the formation of Pakistan and will never leave an opportunity to undo it.¹

This psyche further reinforced when India captured Hyderabad, Junagarh and Kashmir. Muslim league which played an important role in the creation of Pakistan, its leadership who become refugees after partition, came from the areas which did not become part of Pakistan played an important role in creating India's threat perception which influenced Pakistan-Afghanistan relations by making it a ground of India-Pakistan rivalry.²

India-Pakistan rivalry in Afghanistan is not a new phenomenon and has its origin in history. For much part of the history, Pakistan's policy towards Afghanistan is influenced by fear of encirclement by India through alliance with the Afghan Government. India covertly supported Afghanistan on its demand for a Pashtun state carved out of Pakistan for more than three decades after Pakistan's inception. Though the demand for Pushtun state weakened after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. But still it is considered a threat.³ After the partition of subcontinent, India maintained good relations with Afghanistan's Zahir Shah's reign than Pakistan except for a short rupture during 1965 Pakistan-India conflict. In addition, India maintained good relations with successive Afghan communist puppet governments because they did not share Islamist ideology shared by majority of Afghan Jihadi groups backed by Pakistan and US.⁴

There is no denying the fact, that both India and Pakistan used ethnic divides as a means to achieve their various objectives in Afghanistan. In 1990s during Afghan civil war, support network based on ethnicity came into view. Therefore, Afghan politics to a great deal has always been shaped by the politics of identity and the most important political identity is that of ethnic affiliation. For that matter, India has by and large developed its support network amongst non-Pashtun elite i.e. Tajik, Hazara, and Baloch

¹ Khan, I. A., Understanding Pakistan Pro-Taliban Afghan Policy. In *Pakistan's Horizon*, no. 60(2), 2007, pp 142-143.

² Ibid., p145.

³ Ashraf, F., India-Afghanistan Relations: Post 9/11. In *Strategic Studies*[Internet Edition] no. xxvii (2), Retrieved July 3rd, 2009, from <http://www.issi.org.pk/journal.aspx>.

⁴ Ganguly, N. H., Pakistan and Afghanistan: Domestic Pressures and Regional Threats: India Pakistan Rivalry in Afghanistan. In *Journal of International Affairs*, no.63(1), 2009, pp 127-140.

Afghan leaders. To name a few, the well-known Tajik leader from Panjshir valley in northern Afghanistan, Ahmad Shah Masoud had close ties to the Indian security establishment as a warlord.

During Soviet Afghan war (1979-1988) India cooperated and supported Soviet Russia. After their withdrawal Dr. Najibullah (whose family was living in India during and after Afghan war) became head of state received Indian support. In 1992, Mujahidin took power in Afghanistan which forced Najibullah to take refuge in UN complex. He remained confined there for four years until Taliban captured power and hanged him to death. Meanwhile, Pakistan developed its patronage network among the Pashtun population. Traditionally, Pakistan chose to support Pashtuns in Afghanistan, not for the reason that there is large number of Pashtuns in Pakistan, but because of the association developed between well-known Afghan Pashtuns and Pakistani officials during the Soviet-Afghan war in 1979 and onwards.⁵

India's influence and diplomatic presence during Taliban era was marginalized because of Taliban's anti India outlook and their support for Kashmiri Jihad by allowing jihadi camps in the areas controlled by them. About 80,000 to 10, 0000 Pakistanis were recruited in camps in Afghanistan for Jihad in Kashmir between 1994-1999.⁶ As a result, India started supporting Northern alliance.

The 9/11 Al-Qaeda terrorists attacks on US came as a blessing for India in terms of its bilateral ties with Afghanistan. The fall of Taliban in 2001 was seen by India as a golden opportunity to enhance the operations in Afghanistan many fold which was not liked by Pakistan because of the trust deficit between Pakistan and India. Pakistan contends that India has been struggling since the inception of the former to stop Pakistan and Afghanistan from keeping stable ties with each other. It was because of India propaganda that Pakistan would no longer exist as a country, Kabul polled negative vote at the United Nations on membership question of the latter. Latter on along with Soviet Union, it supported King Zahir Shah to support the Pushtunistan issue.

After Hamid Karzai government took charge of Afghanistan, India was the first country to send a diplomatic mission to Kabul, Ministry of external affairs and a medical team drawn from the armed forces landed at Bagram airfield in Parvan province of Afghanistan near Kabul in expression of India's solidarity with the people of Afghanistan. S.M. Lamba special envoy to Afghanistan led the team. He explored the possibility of reopening the Indian embassy which was abandoned in Sept 1996, when Kabul fell to the Taliban.⁷ The embassy formal opening took place in Dec 2001 with Jaswant

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Malik, H., *US Relations with Afghanistan and Pakistan*. Oxford University Press, Karachi 2008, p187.

⁷ Reddy, I., *Inside Afghanistan-End of Taliban Era*. APH Publishing Cooperation, New Delhi 2002.

Singh, then India's Minister for External Affairs, performing the honour, and terming the period of its closure as a painful gap. The pain he referred to had been inflicted by Pakistan. In India's point of view the speedy reopening of its embassy in Kabul represent the start of a new era in its relations with Afghanistan.⁸

Given India's ability to keep friendly ties with Afghanistan, Pakistan came up with its own strategies which impacted Pak-Afghan relations. The paper highlights India factor in Pak-Afghan relations which has the potential to either stabilize or ruin Afghanistan. In addition, it interprets India and Pakistan conflicting objectives in Afghanistan and their implications on achieving harmonious Pak-Afghan relations. Moreover, it highlights the significance of cooperation between Pakistan and India in Afghanistan which will lead the region towards peace and prosperity.

India's Objectives in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has always been focus of India's regional policy because of its geo strategic location, its latent hostility towards Pakistan and for economic reasons. India has several aims in Afghanistan; some of the Indian objectives in Afghanistan are; to contain Taliban so as to neutralize Pakistan's help to Kashmir Jihad.⁹ Secondly, to support democratization and pro-India government in Afghanistan which will contain resurgence of Taliban and other religious and extremist movements. Resurgence of Islamic independent movement and their success have the potential to undermine the social fabric of India by providing a vent to oppressed minorities particularly the Sikhs and Kashmiri Muslims.¹⁰ Thirdly, to achieve leading position in Afghanistan and Central Asian republics by countering Pakistan's sway in the region.¹¹

For this purpose India opened consulates near Pak-Afghan border i.e. Herat, Kandahar, JalalAbad and Mazar-e-Sharif. Diplomatic presence of India is larger than other countries in Afghanistan. Mostly consulates are opened along FATA and Baluchistan border. Pakistan is uneasy over the Indian consulates, in addition to the embassy in Kabul. Moreover, India sent 300 commandos to Kandahar to protect their citizens in post Taliban set up which was viewed by Pakistan with suspicions. Pakistan's concern has been that, reconstruction workers from other countries are also present in Afghanistan but it has not allowed commandos from other countries to

⁸ Zaman, A., India's Increased Involvement in Afghanistan and Centrla Asia: Implications For Pakistan. In *IPRI Journal* , no. 3(2), Islamabad 2003.

⁹ Baluch, Q. B., & Niazi, A. H., Indian Enchroachment in Afghanistan: A New Imperialism in Making, In *The Dialogue*, no.3(1) , Peshawar 2008, p18.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

protect them.¹² Pakistan believe that India through these consulates is involved in covert activities such as terrorism in FATA, NWFP and in Baluchistan aiming at destabilizing Pakistan and it is building anti Pakistan scenario on Afghanistan's soil, which is aggravating bilateral relations and spoiling the environment of trust.¹³ Consulates protect the commercial interests as well as protect and promote the interests of its citizens who are residing in that area. Indubitably, India is involved in the reconstruction of Afghanistan, but its trading activities as well as the presence of its citizens in the areas where the consulates are opened are minimum.¹⁴

In addition, some Pakistani circle highlighted that under US patronage these consulates suppressed Pushtuns by depriving them of their share of authority and were promoting the stakes of other minority groups such as Hazaras, Panjshiri, Tajiks and Uzbeks. This particular behavior could be gauged by officers' posts in all the security services, particularly army and training for governmental posts. Minority groups especially Panjshiri Tajiks were preferred over Pushtuns and were given economic opportunities.¹⁵

Moreover, in order to contain Taliban and Pakistan's sway in Afghanistan, India built up the defense mechanism of the Northern Alliance by giving them high-altitude combatant equipment worth of \$ 10 million via its Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) as well as provided technical guidance to the Northern Alliance.¹⁶ Pakistan believes that some local and foreign elements inside Afghanistan are vigorously involved in backing the miscreants in Baluchistan and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa province.¹⁷

In this regard, Pakistan provided evidence of Brahimdagh Bugti (son of Akbar Bugti) staying in Afghan intelligence house in Kabul, Photographs of his visit to Delhi and some instructions which showed his links with insurgency in Baluchistan (*The News International*, 2008). Most of the people in Baluchistan are distressed over the induction of non-Baluchis in the developmental projects. They are also aggrieved over the unjust division of royalties produced from the natural resources in their province. India is exploiting the already fragile situation as it has interest in Baluchistan which is important future gas pipeline route, full of natural resources.¹⁸

¹² Zeb, R., Cross Border Terrorism: Issues Plaguing Pak-Afghan Relations. In *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, no.4(2), 2006, p72.

¹³ Ashraf, F., *Institute of strategic Studies Islamabad*, Summer 2007. Retrieved from <http://www.issi.org.pk/journal.aspx>, accessed on 03/07/2009.

¹⁴ Cheema, P. I., *The Post*, June 11, 2006. Retrieved from <http://www.the.post.com.pk>, accessed on 1/07/2008.

¹⁵ Aslam, S., Dilemma of Terrorism in South and West Asia: Solution-US exit from Afghanistan. In *Current Affairs Digest*, August 2009, pp 23-24.

¹⁶ Ibid., p 24.

¹⁷ Zeb, R., *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, no.4(2), 2006, p72.

¹⁸ Ganguly, N. H., Pakistan and Afghanistan: Domestic Pressures and Regional Threats: India Pakistan Rivalry in Afghanistan. In *Journal Of International Affairs*, no. 63(1), 2009, pp 127-140.

Baluchistan is Pakistan's strategic heartland making Pakistan one of the most strategically important and sensitive place in the world. Baluchistan is Pakistan solitaire diamond making it central to the heartland i.e. Central Asia and is part of Rimland i.e. Arabian Sea coastline. With Gwader and other ports of Baluchistan as part of Rimland, the southern strategic route to Central Asia originates from Baluchistan making it critical for India. By fomenting trouble and unrest in Baluchistan, the Indians are attempting to delink Pakistan, China and Gwader from Central Asia containing Pakistan's strategic and economic potential because the future of Pakistan upcoming generations is in Baluchistan. (Khalil-ur-Rehman, 2013). Pakistan accuses India and Afghanistan for backing the Baluch National Army (BLA); whose aim is to attract world attention for their separation's movement. Brahamdagh Bugti, the son of former BLA leader Nawab Akbar Bugti, is accused several times of recruiting militants in training camps in Afghanistan.¹⁹

In the situation of large public suicide bombings in Baluchistan, KPK and other parts of the country, that causes large number of civilian casualties, one section of Pakistani population believes Indo-US-Israeli hand in sponsoring terrorism in Pakistan. They hold that the launching pad for carrying out such activities is Afghanistan and the aim is to weaken Pakistani compliance to exploit the minerals, metals gas and strategic wealth of Baluchistan thus to undermine it economically and politically; roll back its nuclear program and to deprive it from its nuclear asset.

Moreover, another important objective of India in Afghanistan is to tap Central Asian energy resources and to develop Afghanistan as a land bridge between Central Asia and India. Indian economy is growing by leaps and bounds with which comes growing energy demands. CARs oil and gas resources make it extremely important for India to forge a relationship with Afghanistan based on cooperation. In this regard, India is investing in constructing roads and infrastructure linking Afghanistan with Central Asian States. India proposed Salma Dam project in Herat province on river Hirasud along with constructing Dams on Kabul and Kunar River in northern Afghanistan which Pakistan believe is to deprive Pakistan of water resources. Pakistan believes that proposed dam will have serious implications for its water supply as it flows through Kabul River into the Indus at Attock.²⁰

In addition, Indian oil companies are active in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. In March 2007, India completed the renovation of a military base at Ayani in Tajikistan: the renewal commenced in 2002 and completed at a cost of US\$10 million.²¹ India is the fourth country after US, Germany,

¹⁹ Personal communication with Retd. Major Dr. Khalil-ur-Rehman at Peshwar, Jan 12, 2013.

²⁰ Haider, M., Iqbal. A., *Daily Dawn*, Sep 25, 2008. Retrieved from <http://www.dawn.com> accessed on 22/7/2011.

²¹ Ibid.

Russia to have a base at Central Asia, According to Indian journalist Suda Ramachandaran, maintaining a base at Ayani will let India respond quickly to any danger arising from unstable Afghanistan. It gives India important facility to insert Special Forces when situation demand on the occasion of military conflict with Pakistan. It will increase India's ability to hit Pakistan from Tajikistan and will help India's mounting interests in Central Asia.²² According to Indian intelligence sources, India after the fall of Taliban decided to maintain influence in Afghanistan and to counter Pakistan's interference in Afghanistan.²³ For this reason it renovated a base at Ayani/Farkhor.

Pakistan doesn't allow its soil to be used by India for transportation of goods to Afghanistan. Therefore, maintaining a base at Ayani will help India to air lift necessary relief items from Ayani to Farkhor and then to Afghanistan. Apart from Pakistan's dimension attached to Ayani bases it will also help India to increase its influence in Central Asia.²⁴ Many analysts believe that India's role in Afghanistan through reconstruction projects and diplomacy is a source of anxiety for Pakistan. Because it could lead to a strategic encirclement of Pakistan. Indian presence is a source of worry for Pakistan's geo-strategic and geo political reasons and can hamper efforts against terrorism. There are chances that India presence deteriorates regional tensions as Pakistan will not allow Indian strategic encirclement and can resort to counter measures.

India Role in Afghanistan Reconstruction: Indo- Pak Competition in Afghanistan

Pakistan altered its Afghan policy under pressure rather than its will. Apart from US pressure, Indian factor which is very important in Pakistan security calculus played a role in shaping Pak-Afghan policy. India, immediately after 9/11 offered to provide unconditional support to US in a global war against terrorism.²⁵ Indian then prime minister Atal Behari Vajpayee in a letter to US president expressed that India would provide whatever support the US wanted, including military bases in its global war against terrorism. Soon India declared its offer of providing support in war against terrorism which alarmed Pakistan. Moreover, after 9/11 India was pressurizing US to declare Pakistan a rouge state and to take action against freedom fighters in Kashmir which India considers terrorists.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ramchandana, S., *Asia Times*, August 12, 2006. Retrieved from <http://www.asiatimes.com> accessed on 20/05/2010

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Malik, H., *US Relations with Afghanistan and Pakistan*. Oxford University Press, Karachi 2008.

To discourage Indian efforts, Pakistan changed its Afghan policy and aligned itself with US. Pakistan still wants to have pliant regime in Afghanistan but it is apprehensive of growing Indo-Afghan friendship. As growing Indian influence in Afghanistan will limit Pakistan's role in Afghanistan. Although, Afghanistan and India established trading relations and Pakistan has allowed both countries to trade but has refused to allow transit route to India because of mistrust between them for transportation of its goods to Afghanistan.²⁶ Pakistan asserts that Indian commodities to Afghanistan via its territory will have serious security implications and would lay negative impact on the Kashmir policy of Pakistan. In addition, to prevent smuggling it cannot allow goods to be routed through Pakistani territory that have lower import duties than Pakistan in Afghanistan.

India is playing a major role in Afghanistan's reconstruction and is the sixth major donor to Afghanistan. It presented buses and airplanes to Afghanistan, sponsoring lunch programs in schools, undertook the construction of the parliament building in Kabul as well as strategically important new roads. The Afghan government enjoys outstanding ties with New Delhi which has added to Pakistan's paranoia. After the fall of the Taliban government India entered Afghanistan to get back its influence in Afghanistan which it lost during Taliban rule. For this purpose it adopted policy of soft power. According to Joseph Nye soft power is the capability to obtain what one desire through attraction rather than intimidation or money. It crops up from the charm of a country's political ideas, policies and culture. When ones policies are considered as justifiable in the opinion of others, soft power is increased. Applying this definition on India's role in Afghanistan one can gauge that India is struggling to increase her influence in Central and South Asia.²⁷ The demonstration of India pursuing soft power can be seen on several fronts which is viewed by Pakistan with suspicions.

India pledged 100 million dollars in aid at Tokyo conference on reconstruction of Afghanistan held in Jan 2002, at the same time it also offered help in the improvement of rail-road links, hospitals, schools and information technology. In Dec 2001, before the interim government officially took power, plane loads of aid from New Delhi had been send off to Kabul. Besides medicines, grains and other commodities the cargo carrying relief goods also contained Hindi films and music cassettes, signifying India's longing to use its culture weapons in the fight for authority in Afghanistan. India also pledged to export million tons of wheat by the end of 2001 and its airlines recommenced flights to Kabul and Mazar Sharif. Several Indian training programs were initiated for the Afghans in

²⁶ Pattanaik, S, S., In Pursuit Of Strategic Depth: The Changing Dynamics Of Pakistan's Afghan Policy. In K.Wariko (ed.), *Afghanistan: The Challenge*. Bhavan Books, Delhi 2007, p 157.

²⁷ Khan, A., India Quest for Strategic Ingress In Afghanistan and Its Implication for Pakistan. In *ISSR Papers*, no.1, 2009, p15.

journalism, accounting, and policing. India moved in Afghanistan, without any delay with humanitarian assistance after the departure of the Taliban from Kabul.

In corruption, the Afghan government is one of the world's most corrupt governments. Transparency International ranked Afghanistan on 175th position which is the lowest position, besides Somalia and North Korea. Regardless of this poor monetary record, India transferred aid monies to the Kabul administration without any conditionality attached. Amar Sinha, the Indian ambassador to Kabul, said to *Reuters*, "We have no reason to believe that the money will be wasted." The direct funding have achieved a broader political strategy i.e. Karzai has become aggrieved of the orders he has been receiving from Western donors, and the refusal to impose terms on its aid has allowed India to set itself apart.²⁸

Things started moving fast on political front too. A number of senior members of the Afghan interim arrangement, such as Interior Minister Younis Qanooni and Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah, paid a visit to India before the interim administration started functioning. Mr. Qanooni is said to have demanded India's help in setting up a national security force in Afghanistan even.²⁹

On the economic front, India designed a preferential trade agreement with Afghanistan to encourage the supply of Afghan products to India, as well as to assist Indian private companies to take part in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. According to the terms of agreement India planned to build a 130-200 km road from Chahbahar port³⁰ in Iran to Kabul to speed up the transport of Indian commodities to Afghanistan and to export three items from Afghanistan: i.e. fresh fruits, dry fruits, medicine and herbs.

The road was completed in 2009 to connect Dilaram in South-western Afghanistan to Zahidan and Chahbahar on the Arabian Sea to give the landlocked nation access to maritime trade through Iran thereby reducing Afghanistan's dependence on Gwader port in Pakistan. Pakistan felt threatened by the construction of strategic routes by India which undermines Pakistan struggle for Central Asian prospects.³¹ Here the point to be noted is that India reconstruction policy for Afghanistan is well targeted, designed in such a way to increase sway over every sector of Afghan society, to win

²⁸ Mashru, R., *The Diplomat*, Jan, 2014.

²⁹ Zaman, A., *IPRI Journal*, no.3. 2003.

³⁰ Chahbahar Port is situated on the Makran Coast of the Sistan and Baluchistan of Iran and is officially declared as a free trade and industrial zone by the Iranian government. The port has been developed by India. It is the closest and best access point to the Indian Ocean. Its location is at the most secure and closet route to Central Asia and Afghanistan market. See E-paper *The Financial Daily International*. Retrieved from <http://www.thefinancialdailyinternational.com>, accessed on June 22nd, 2013.

³¹ Khattak, I., *Pakistan Strategic Culture and Foreign policy Making*. Nova Publications, New York 2007, p 69.

heart and minds of Afghans, gain the highest political advantage and to undermine Pakistani authority.

Afghanistan is important for both India and Pakistan for economic, security and strategic reasons. India considers Afghanistan its strategic ally and considers it cheaper to engage Pakistan in Afghanistan rather than in Kashmir.³² The former believes that in the name of reconstruction India wants to capture its markets, resources and encircle Pakistan by establishing civil and military relations with Afghanistan.

Accusations that Afghanistan is the place of rising Indo-Pakistan proxy war are common. Afghanistan is very much significant for the security and economic prospects of the region, and India has constantly achieved its interests through cultural and soft diplomacy. By signing several agreements of bilateral significance, offering aid and taking active part in Afghanistan's reconstruction, India has remarkably supported Karzai and his government. And this strategy of using soft power has paid off. In November 2011, a group of Indian public and private companies won a proposal to mine in three states in Afghanistan which is a rewarding project with an estimated investment cost of \$10.8 billion.³³

India and Pakistan both are struggling in post Taliban Afghanistan for gaining greater say and influence in Afghanistan. India is enhancing its influence in Afghanistan through its development investment and has undertaken capital intensive projects. It pledged for constructing Dams, developing Afghanistan communication infrastructure and linking Afghanistan trade corridor with Iran.³⁴ Therefore, India in lieu of these financial investments and capital intensive projects gained political influence, came closer to Afghanistan government and may be getting greater support for its permanent seat in UN Security Council from the latter in the future. Alternatively, Pakistan is using its geographical contiguity, transit trade, financial aid to enhance its influence in Afghanistan. In this regard, it is preventing India to gain similar kind of advantage by denying it the right to use Pakistani territory for exporting its goods to Afghanistan.

Pakistan considers Afghanistan its immediate neighbour which gives it a natural right to have more say in its politics and considers India its arch rival in Afghanistan. Pakistani military president, General Zia in 1988 said that Pakistan being a frontline state have earned the right to have a friendly power in Kabul. In addition, it we will not allow a return to the pre-war situation, where there was large Indian and Soviet influence in Afghanistan,

³² Center for Strategic and International Studies, *Report of CSIS Post Conflict Reconstruction Project: Engaging Regional Players in Afghanistan*. Nov 2009.

³³ Mashru, *The Diplomat*. 2014

³⁴ Kerr, B. R., *Center for Conflict and Peace Studies*, 2011, Nov-Dec. Retrieved from <http://www.google.com>, accessed on 23/08/2012.

who supported claims on Pakistan's territory.³⁵ After the laps of twenty years, this quote still identifies how Pakistan analysis its link with Afghanistan.

In addition, there is reluctance on the part of Afghanistan and US to curtail Indian growing influence in Afghanistan which has created mistrust between Pakistan and Afghanistan as well as between US and Pakistan. India believes that it can reach Central Asia through Afghanistan since air route is not viable. To achieve this goal, its working since Taliban ouster to gain influence in Afghanistan, by strengthening ties with Afghanistan war lords and will go to any extent to prevent Islamic militancy, Taliban governments which is threatening its regional ambitions and security, protect its interests and contain anti-India block. While Pakistan believes that supporting Pushtun is the one of the few options available to gain influence in the Afghanistan.

Discussing the above scenario Amit Ranjan in "*Afghanistan quagmire: is there a way out?*" wrote: "Two countries that have been pro-active in Afghanistan are India and Afghanistan. Since 1947, they have been engaged against each 'other' in Afghanistan. At present too their rival 'strategic' interests have pitched them against the 'other'...Is there any solution to the forthcoming predicament? Yes, there is. The 'only' 'effective' solution to deal with the post-2014 mess is cooperation between India and Pakistan over Afghanistan."³⁶

India is an emerging global power but it cannot achieve its goals unless it has friendly relations with neighbours, especially Pakistan. Pakistan cannot get out of plethora of problems unless a compromise is achieved at least on some aspect of its relations with India. As long as they look at their relations in the prism of zero sum game, South Asian region as a whole will keep on suffering. Now the question here arises is India and Pakistan antagonism in post-2014 Afghanistan inevitable? Not necessarily, especially if both adopt the adverse partnership model (formulated by Professor Carol Bell).³⁷

In fact, Afghanistan can, be the first stepping stone towards a more prosperous South Asia and a more successful peace process. The model highlights that, whenever in any situation of conflict costs overshadow profits, the players involved should agree to an adverse partnership. Professor Bell by "adverse partnership" does not "mean to entail anything chiefly friendly or trusting but only recognition between the leading players, that they have concrete common interests as well as sharp differences."

³⁵ Christopher, L., Budihas, C.L., *What Drives Pakistan's Interest In Afghanistan?*. The Institute of Land and Warfare Association of US State Army, 2011, p16. Retrieved from www.ausa.org/publications/ilw/Documents/LWP_82_web.pdf

³⁶ *Daily Times*, July 5, 2013.

³⁷ *Daily Times*, Jan 5, 2014.

Implementing this model in their policies towards Afghanistan would better serve their interests.

Conclusion

Unfortunately, Afghanistan has been a victim of regional and extra-regional interference since past centuries. Regardless of the existence of international coalition forces and the pledges of neighboring countries to support its autonomy, territorial integrity, and sovereignty, the country is still prone to intervention by its neighbors. This could destabilize Afghanistan's future peace and stability.

Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan should be analyzed in the context of South Asian security web in which the latter is the offshoot of Pakistan's policy towards India. Therefore, there is a regional dimension attached to Pak-Afghan relations. India and Pakistan have turned Afghanistan into a center stage for settling their past scores and for enhancing regional standing in the post-Taliban set up.

The research paper demonstrates that Pak-Afghan mutual mistrust has deepened with the Indian presence in Afghanistan. India is viewing Afghanistan as a lucrative and productive investment country as well as an "extended neighborhood." This raises Pakistan's angst and prevents Pak-Afghanistan harmonious relations. Actions by one country to exert influence in Afghanistan would cause a corresponding counter reaction by the other neighbor that may complicate the Afghan imbroglio, especially when the US withdrawal is imminent.

The Indian reconstruction activities, educational-cultural contribution to Afghan society, training and weaponry to the Northern Alliance, clandestine activities of consulates and marginalizing Pushtuns have exacerbated mistrust between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Despite some efforts in détente in India-Pakistan relations in the wake of series of confidence building measures, the Indian activities in Afghanistan pose a threat to Pakistan "strategic depth" policy, its reliance on non-state actors bear the potential to render Afghanistan again into a proxy battlefield.

India has gained a foothold and endeared to the Afghan people through the quantum and nature of investment policies which have surpassed that of Pakistan. Needless to say that Indian investment and social security initiatives are not born out of mere generosity but on realpolitik considerations to become an established "regional power" and make further inroads into Central Asia. Hence, Pakistan needs to prepare a robust counter-strategy based on enhancing its economic interests for national objectives. Further, destabilizing Afghan state is neither in the interest of Pakistan nor that of India -- as both will not remain immune to spillover effect of political turbulence. It is high time that both need to revisit their foreign policy objectives and reconcile their long standing differences in Afghanistan. An

appropriate way could be by inking agreements on regional connectivity amongst Pakistan-Afghanistan and India. These will prove to be a harbinger of regional synergy and shall be in tune with regional collaboration policies adopted by many countries in this age of globalization.

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POLITICS OF PATRIMONIALISM REVISITED: THE CASE OF AFGHAN STATE MAKING AND UNMAKING

*Shahida Aman**

Abstract

By adopting the concept of 'patrimonialism' as an analytical framework, this paper attempts to decipher its role in the making and breaking of the Afghan state. Patrimonialism is synonym in literature with post colonial elite's indulgence in patronage and predatory practices, whose fall out impact from mismanagement, corruption and rent seeking results in state failure. This paper argues that patrimonialism, which was embedded in the very creation of the Afghan state as a tribal polity, performed certain indispensable functions in maintaining the unity and longevity of the new state. However, its pervasive impact destabilized regimes, distracted long-term bureaucratization, hindered growth of legal constitutional basis of Afghan polity, prevented the rise of an extractable base of the economy, politicized the military and frustrated attempts at modernization. The frustration among the nascent Afghan intelligentsia and the educated with limited pace of modernization and continual patronage politics found its expression in support to radical leftist and rightist groups in the system, which had long-term destabilizing impact on Afghan state. The paper further argues that patrimonialism in Afghan case has been highly resistant to change and is manifesting itself in the post 2001 state building process in albeit new forms and shapes, which is in turn hampering the achievement of desired goals in the post 2001 state building exercise in the country.

Key words: *Afghan state making, patrimonialism, patronage politics, rent-seeking, state building*

Introduction

Patrimonialism, neo-patrimonialism, patronage politics, clientelism and rent seeking are terms used in literature to describe post-colonial elite's

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mismanagement of their inherited polities through indulgence in corrupt and predatory practices. Such patrimonial indulgence is credited with generating economic mismanagement, political instability and conflict in their political systems, producing conditions for state failure.¹ In this ‘inside out process of state failure,’² political elite’s mishandling of governance in their respective systems through patrimonial and corrupt practices, weakens the core or center of the state and pressure from the periphery forces in on the center, causing its failure.³ This paper explores the dynamics of politics of patrimonialism in the case of Afghan state formation and building. It is divided into five sections. The introduction is followed by an analysis of how patrimonialism, neopatrimonialism and rent seeking are understood in the context of developing states, including the nature of crisis generated by these and their contribution to state failure. The third section delves into the functioning of patrimonialism in the making and un-making of the Afghan state. The fourth section attempts to understand its working in post 2001 state building exercise in Afghanistan and the last section provides the conclusions.

Post-Colonial State Building: Patrimonialism, Neo-Patrimonialism, Corruption and Rent-Seeking

Neo-patrimonialism, clientelism, and patron client relationship, are terms that rely heavily on Max Weber’s contrast of patrimonial rule (observed in pre-capitalist societies), wherein, allegiance to a ruler is based

¹ Several scholars blame the patrimonial and neo-patrimonial practices by Third World regimes to destabilize their states. Ignatieff, for example, cites Sierra Leone’s example to argue that a decent British colonial inheritance was largely squandered by the indigenous elites and that of Angola and Congo, where weak colonial inheritance was destroyed further by civil war in the post independence period. See Ignatieff, Michael. (Winter 2006). “Intervention and State Failure,” *Dissent*, 115-23. Others adopting the same line of approach include, Szeftel, Morris (September 2000). “Clientelism, Corruption & Catastrophe,” *Review of African Political Economy* 27, no. 85, 427-41; Bratton, Michael and Nicolas Van de Walle. (July 1994). “Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa,” *World Politics* 46, no. 4, 453-489; See Hutchcroft, Paul D. (1997). “The Politics of Privilege; Assessing the Impact of Rents, Corruption, and Clientelism on Third World Development,” *Political Studies*, 44, no. 3, 639-658; Evans, Peter B. (December 1989). “Predatory, Developmental, and Other Apparatuses: A Comparative Political Economy Perspective on the Third World State,” *Sociological Forum, Special Issue- Comparative National Development: Theories and Facts for the 1990s* 4, no. 4, 561-587; Bates, Robert. (2008). *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late Century Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press; and Allen, Chris. (September 1995). “Understanding African Politics,” *Review of African Political Economy* 22, no. 65, 301-320.

² This term is used by Hentze to refer to the process of state failure in Liberia and DRC. See Hentz, James J. (2004). “State Collapse and Regional Contagion in Sub-Sahara Africa: Lessons for Zimbabwe,” *South African Journal of Military Studies* 32, no. 4, 145-51.

³ State failure here is understood as the incapacity or inability of state’s formal institutions to deliver services in security, stability, economic management, legitimacy and social services.

on personal loyalty, charisma and traditional legitimacy, with 'rational' bureaucratic forms of governance (seen in modern capitalism).⁴ Neo-patrimonialism, is distinguished from traditional patrimonialism as a modern form of exchange, characterized by clients' provision of political support to the patron in exchange for pay-offs that the patron will deliver after capturing public resources.⁵ Kraushaar and Lambach, differentiate the two by arguing that in classical patrimonialism, favours are distributed according to the whims of the ruler, in neo-patrimonialism, favours are dispensed behind the guise of national legal-statehood.⁶ It is described as a personal kind of social relationship between leaders and their followers, within the formal hierarchy of the state,⁷ complimented by personalized exchanges and little freedom of entry and exit.⁸ Leaders' support is not dependent on ideology or law but personal exchanges,⁹ whose particularities include: transfer of economic and political resources of loyalty, votes and protection in a package deal; unconditionality and long-range credit; solidarity based on personal honour or spiritual attachment to the patron; a long term, but informal and tightly binding contractual understanding; and a relationship based on vertical and dyadic fashion, making the patron monopolize certain positions of vital importance for the clients.¹⁰ In short, it is largely seen as a form of exchange, wherein, personal favours of job distribution, licences and projects on patron's behalf are reciprocated by the clients through mobilizing political support and other favours.

'Rents' and 'rent-seeking' terms are borrowed from the literature on economics to refer to the state practice of restricting market operations

⁴ See Weber, Max. (1970). *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, Translated, Edited with an Introduction by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 296-97.

⁵ See Khan, Mushtaq H. (December 2005). "Markets, States and Democracy: Patron-Client Networks and the Case for Democracy in Developing Countries," *Democratization* 12, no. 5, 712-13.

⁶ Kraushaar, Maren and Daniel Lambach. (December 2009). "Hybrid Political Orders: The Added Value of a new Concept," (The Australian Centre for peace and Conflict Studies Occasional Paper Series, Number 14), 10, accessed October 12, 2011, <http://www.issr.uq.edu.au/acpacs-publications>.

⁷ See Christopher Clapham. (2002). "The Challenge to the State in a Globalized World," *Development and Change* 33, no. 5, 780.

⁸ Khan, Mushtaq H. (2000). "Introduction," in *Rents, Rent-Seeking and Economic Development*, edited by Mushtaq H. Khan and Kwame S. Jomo. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 10-11.

⁹ See Bratton, and de Walle. (July 1994). "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa," 458-59.

¹⁰ See Eisenstadt, S. N. and Roniger. (January 1980). "Patron-Client Relations as a Model of Structuring Social Exchange," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22, no. 1, 49-51. Szeftel, terms it a politics of class domination and exploitation based on relations of coercive dependence and gives example of tenant's dependence on landlord, which compels him to obedience in return for access to land. See Szeftel. (September 2000). "Clientelism, Corruption & Catastrophe," 430-35.

through licensing etc., to benefit certain sectors or firms. Neo-patrimonial favours assume rent forms and such rents are distributed by political patrons inside the government for obliging certain sections and firms. Khan, defines rents as incomes, higher than would otherwise be earned by individuals and firms, and rent seeking as activities, such as bribing, coercion, etc., to create, maintain or change rights and institutions on which particular rents are based.¹¹ Rents are created when the state restricts market operations by rationing foreign exchange and imports, curbing free trade and prohibiting the introduction of new products for the purpose of benefiting some firms.¹²

Corruption is one form both neo-patrimonialism and rent seeking assume in the patron's quest for influencing and obliging followers and vice versa. It can be defined in Szeftel's words as 'the misuse of public office, public resources or public responsibility for private-personal or group gain'.¹³ Corruption functions when formal rules are transgressed by officials to allocate public resources in response to offers of financial gain or political support.¹⁴ Hence it is understood as a deviation encompassing violation of formal rules for gaining private financial gains.¹⁵ A characteristic that patrimonialism, corruption and rent seeking share is their resistance to change. These informal institutions may transform albeit slowly, in response to changes in formal state institutions and their practices in cases where their levels of efficiency are raised through state induced reforms and restructuring.¹⁶ The evidence from many Third World countries suggests that such informal practices have been hard to replace and pervasively influence the formal in course of institutional restructuring. Even, European state making experience had a fair share of inefficient and patrimonial regimes that proved extremely durable and hard to replace.¹⁷ The evolution of non-patrimonial political structures was slow, complimented by monarchy's successful extraction of domestic resources with the ability to provide justice to the people and concede some form of control over public purse to their representatives.¹⁸

¹¹ See Khan. (2000). "Introduction," 5-7.

¹² See Hutchcroft. (1997). "The Politics of Privilege," 40; and Evans (December 1989). "Predatory, Developmental, and Other Apparatuses," 564.

¹³ Szeftel. (September 2000), "Clientelism, Corruption and Catastrophe," 427.

¹⁴ Khan. (2000). "Introduction," 8.

¹⁵ See Hutchcroft. (1997). "The Politics of Privilege," 643.

¹⁶ See Helmke, Gretchen and Steven Levitsky. (December 2004). "Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: A Research Agenda," *Perspectives on Politics* 2, no. 4, 732-33.

¹⁷ Patrimonial practices in the form of proprietary office holding, tax farming, and inside finance pervasive in the initial phase of state building in England, resulted in inefficiencies, arbitrariness, and diversion of public revenues into private hands. The case of 300 year long French monarchy suggests that such practices last for longer periods. See Ertman, Thomas. (1997). *Birth of the Leviathan: Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 317-324.

¹⁸ Informal relations based on 'patronage, corruption and incestuous relations between big and small business were widespread in the US as well as Europe'. It took centuries for

Post colonial elite's indulgence in neo-patrimonial, corrupt and rent seeking practices is blamed to be a product of post independence inheritance of incongruent and weak polities, which forced the local elite in pre- and post independence period to use patronage politics to mobilize locals and legitimize their rule.¹⁹ It is also considered to arise from the character of international state system in post Second World War period, anomalies in the economic structures of developing societies and from elite desire to create effective informal institutions in the face of formal ones being too costly to set up or in pursuance of some vested interests unable to be accommodated by the formal ones.²⁰ Clientelism (patron-client politics), to Allen was generated in the last days of the colonial period, when colonizers in their eagerness to hold elections (prior to leaving) and ensure electoral support for pro-colonizer sympathizer parties (conservative parties as opposed to radical ones), made the indigenous elite offer cash, lands and other collective benefits to local influentials.²¹ Though, it ensured electoral mobilization in support of conservative parties, however, such techniques laid the basis for future basis of politics on patron-client relationship. Taking a similar line, Englebert blames neo-patrimonialism on the legitimacy deficit of post colonial political systems, itself a product of incongruence between post and pre-colonial state institutions and demarcation of boundaries that amalgamated distinct communities or divided long integrated political communities.²² Such legitimacy deficit made the elite take recourse to

codification of informal into formal and formalization of rules developed later than industrialization and urbanization. See Boesen, Nils. (December 2006). "Governance and Accountability: How do the Formal and the Informal Interplay and Change." International Seminar on Informal Institutions and Development-What do we know and what can we do?, Input Paper for Session B: Governance, Accountability and Capacity Development (11-12 December 2006), 3. Accessed March 12, 2012, <http://www.oecd.org/dac/governance-development/37680055.pdf>

¹⁹ See Allen. (September 1995). "Understanding African Politics," 301-305; Englebert, Pierre. (March 2000). "Pre-Colonial Institutions, Post-Colonial States, and Economic Development in Tropical Africa," *Political Research Quarterly* 53, no. 1, 15-23; and Bratton and de Walle. (July 1994). "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa," 468-84.

²⁰ See Helmke and Levitsky. (December 2004). "Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics," 730; Khan, Mushtaq H. (December 2005). "Markets, States and Democracy: Patron-Client Networks and the case for Democracy in Developing Countries," *Democratization* 12, no. 5, 706-722; Clapham. (2002). "The Challenge to the State in a Globalized World," 778-81; and Sorensen, Georg. (December 1996). "Development as a Hobbesian Dilemma," *Third World Quarterly* 17, no. 5, 903-14.

²¹ See Allen. (September 1995). "Understanding African Politics," 301-305. Allen's explanation also applies to pre-partition India, when the All India Muslim League party (elections of 1945-1946), had to co-opt the support of local influentials/ landlords in Punjab to win Muslim votes, but such an alliance proved destabilizing for Pakistan. The leadership lacking long term commitment to the Muslim League ideology and after Mr. Jinnah's death, engaged in factional competition over resources, bifurcating the party into different factions, each headed by powerful patrons.

²² For Englebert, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland grew into more legitimate states on the basis of their post- independence political culture and geographic boundaries not clashing

patronizing political alliances, rather than basing them on long-term ideological commitments. It is precisely for this reason that in the post independence period, the elite used it as a material inducement for inducing national and cultural assimilation.²³

The explanations for the rise of patronage politics in the post-colonial states as arising from pre-independence political and electoral context is inadequate for explaining why such trends have persisted for longer periods in the post-independence period. Patrimonialism and neo-patrimonialism seem to persist, when local or national elites find it difficult to change formal rules, or create formal institutions. This happens, when in the absence of state institutions, it is too costly to establish formal ones, or when the elites focus on goals that are not legally acceptable locally or internationally.²⁴ Corrupt and rent seeking practices are also blamed on the economic shortages of impersonal and transparent redistributive activities in the Third World. Weak economic structures in subsistence agriculture, petty production and trade, low levels of income and weak property rights, prohibit generation of surpluses for protection of assets and economic activities and results in clientelist practices of seeking redistribution by other means.²⁵ To some scholars, such as, Clapham and Sorensen, politics of international state system in the post Second World War created artificial stability in the world, premised on respect to sanctity of state borders, absence of external threats and Cold War alliance politics. Such international guarantees of state's inviolable borders and non-intervention created incentives for local elites to refrain from developing domestic institutions of stability or coercion and encouraged them to indulge in predation.²⁶ This artificial stability from the international system is recently undergoing change since the end of the Cold War period, when international community has increasingly intervened for state building in unstable or weak and failed polities under the pretext of 'humanitarianism' and 'sovereignty as responsibility.'²⁷

with pre-colonial entities. Therefore, these grew 1.6 percent faster per year in per capita terms, than their illegitimate counterparts of Somalia and Congo DR. See Englebert (March 2000). "Pre-Colonial Institutions, Post-Colonial States, and Economic Development in Tropical Africa," 15-23.

²³ See Bratton and de Walle. (July 1994). "Neo-Patrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa," 468-84.

²⁴ See Helmke and Levitsky. (December 2004). "Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics," 730.

²⁵ See Khan. (December 2005). "Markets, States and Democracy: Patron-Client Networks and the case for Democracy in Developing Countries," 706-722.

²⁶ See Clapham. (2002). "The Challenge to the State in a Globalized World," 778-81; and Sorensen. (December 1996). "Development as a Hobbesian Dilemma," 903-14.

²⁷ Both these doctrines have provided justification for the increasing number of post Cold War period interventionism by the international community in the so-called failed states. These doctrines stipulate the exercise of a state's sovereignty to be synonym with the state's responsibility of protecting basic human rights of its citizens and justify military

Patrimonialism and corruption are largely seen in negative light,²⁸ while rent seeking is a highly debated topic in social sciences literature, in relation to their productive employment (or otherwise) by bureaucracies for stimulating investment and growth in the developing societies.²⁹ In defense of rent seeking, Boesen, cites Singapore's successes as resting on informal as well as formal governance structures. He also mentions South Korea's informal patron client processes to provide a major motivating push to its initial growth in the industrial sector.³⁰ While rent seeking in corporatist states may have helped the cause of growth, corruption's diversion of expenditure from development goals to private gains and resultant decrease in state's tax revenues is widely known.³¹ Corruption at the official level is also blamed for slowing economic growth and development. In several econometric surveys of World Bank, corruption negatively correlates with development indicators of investment and growth rates.³²

Politics of clientelism and patrimonialism are causally related to state weakness and failure. These are argued to be retrogressively linked to

intervention by the international community in the face of violence, war and conflict in such states. For further details, see Lund, Michael S. (1996). *Preventing Violent Conflicts: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy* (Washington D.C.: US Institute of Peace Press); Deng, Francis et al. (1996). *Sovereignty as Responsibility: Conflict Management in Africa* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Press); ICISS. (2001). "The Responsibility to Protect," (Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, Ottawa, International Development Research Centre); United Nations. (2004). "A More Secured World: Our Shared Responsibility," (Report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change) and Krasner, Stephen D. (2004). "Governance Failures and Alternatives to Sovereignty," (Centre on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law CDDRL Working Paper No. 1, 2 November 2004), accessed February 1, 2010, <http://cddrl.stanford.edu>.

²⁸ There is an argument that clientelism may serve as an effective instrument of political mobilization among the more marginalized sections of the community and provide a limited form of redistribution for them achieved through activating networks of political support for access to political power and state resource. See Szeftel. (September 2000). "Clientelism, Corruption & Catastrophe," 435.

²⁹ In South Korea and Taiwan, state bureaucracies productively employed rents by rewarding growth enhancing technologies and firms, settling property rights, transferring rents to efficient individuals and groups and ensuring efficient monitoring and discipline of borrowers. And in Pakistan, rents could not be managed productively due to factional competition over distributive rents and capitalists indulgence in political rent seeking to buy political protection for rents. For details see, Khan. (2000). "Rent-Seeking as a Process," in *Rents, Rent seeking and Economic Development*, 89-104. Evans argues about rents stimulating investment in South Korea and Taiwan due to a long history of bureaucratic traditions and favourable geo-political and economic environment in these states. See Evans. (December 1989). "Predatory, Developmental, and Other Apparatuses," 561-87.

³⁰ See Boesen. (December 2006). "Governance and Accountability: How do the Formal and the Informal Interplay and Change," 3.

³¹ Hutchcroft. (1997). "The Politics of Privilege," 645-55.

³² See Alejandro, Gaviria. (February 2010). "The effects of Corruption and Crime on Firm Performance: Evidence from Latin America," accessed May 13, 2010, <http://rru.world.org/Documents/PapersLink/Effectsoncrime.pdf>; and Dreher, Alex., and Thomas Harzfeld. (2005). "The Economic Costs of Corruption," accessed May 13, 2010, <http://129.3.20.41/eps/pe/papers/0506/0506001.pdf>.

factional competition and conflict over resources, ruler's indulgence in corruption and predation, economic pitfalls, failure of democracy and reformist politics giving way to authoritarian politics, military intervention and civil war.³³ Clientelism promotes factional competition over distribution of public resources and leads to politicization of ethnic, religious and kinship identities. Resource scarcity and fear of meager payoffs drives factions to indulge in corrupt and predatory practices. The resentment felt by the left out groups finds its expression in violent challenge to the state. And resultant repression by the regime for putting down opposition breeds violence and radicalism. Clientelism and patrimonialism are said to be negatively influencing democratization and reformation processes in the developing states. These informal institutions prevent the growth of mass political consciousness and participation by fortifying elite structures and politics of particularism.³⁴

Patronage politics is further blamed for the failure of reformist movements in African states. Reno, cites failure of reformist movement in Nigeria to argue that ruler's manipulation over distribution of resources, including markets, conferred on them privileges to recruit and train young reformist revolutionary groups as personal militias to fight political rivals.³⁵ It changed their character from reform movements to loyalists of particular groups in power. Patronage politics is further held responsible for authoritarian politics, military interventions and ruler's indulgence in spoil politics.³⁶ When patrimonial regimes are faced with limited resources for redistribution, they restrict competition over patronage benefits to certain groups and parties, especially in terms of distribution of employment benefits and denial of electoral competition.³⁷ Denial of resources coupled with bad economic management and lack of mediation between the state and discontented groups (which resort to force and strikes and face government's repression), create conditions of chronic political instability. This was

³³ See Kraushaar and Lambach. (December 2009). "Hybrid Political Orders: The Added Value of a new Concept," 9; Bratton and de Walle, (July 1994). "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa," 460-68; Reno, William. (2002). "The Politics of Insurgency in Collapsing States," *Development and Change*, 33, no. 5, 837-58; Allen. (September 1995). "Understanding African Politics," 301-320; Robert Bates. (2008). *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late Century Africa*. P.P 34-52; and Szeftel. (September 2000), "Clientelism, Corruption and Catastrophe," 430-35.

³⁴ See Kraushaar and Lambach. (December 2009). "Hybrid Political Orders: The Added Value of a new Concept," 9.

³⁵ To Reno, violence occurs when regime's patronage based monopoly over commerce collapses and there is elite co-optation of armed groups. The Bakassi Boys in Eastern Nigeria, instead of fighting existing political networks, fight the political battles of their incumbent politician patrons. See Reno. (2002). "The Politics of Insurgency in Collapsing States," 837-58.

³⁶ In Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Somalia, Uganda, Ghana and Guinea, military coups displaced civilian governments and imposed no-party systems. See Allen. (September 1995). "Understanding African Politics," 301-20.

³⁷ See Bates. (2008). *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late Century Africa*, 34-52.

evident in the case of breakdown of civil order in Uganda and Chad and regime/state collapse in Sierra Leone, Sudan and Zaire.³⁸

Scholars have also highlighted the negative fall-out of Patrimonialism and rent seeking on a state's economy.³⁹ It is argued, for example that the distribution of state's resources to wide communal groups discourages capital accumulation and slows economic growth. The resultant lack of a capitalist class narrows resource extraction from the private sectors. Dwindling state resources also undercuts neo-patrimonial regime's capacity to manage political change peacefully⁴⁰ and the result is recourse to coercion, which undermines state legitimacy. In a number of African states, introduction of control regime (restrictions on trade, over-valuation of exchange rate to benefit industrialists and protectionist policies) for benefiting targeted communities imposed high costs on their economies and forced them to take recourse to IMF's Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The SAP's structural reforms hit at these state's regulatory capacity to control corruption, and provide services and employment. This led to a mushrooming growth of informal economy and populist demands for accountability and participatory politics. Regimes in such African states responded to these changes by indulging in more spoils, defaulted on loans and faced persistent instability. The ensuing non-performance of basic state functions, coercion and repression encouraged violence, civil war and state failure in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Rwanda and Zaire.⁴¹

Patrimonialism, rent seeking and corruption have influenced the growth of states negatively and contributed to state failure. The debate on post colonial state building cannot be separated from the socio-political environment in which the elites of developing states operated. Their dilemma stems from dichotomy between promotion of stability and a sense of nationhood in the face of narrow financial base and heterogeneous society. Material inducements by way of patronage politics to factional leaders are largely extended to avoid instability and broaden the base of popular support to the party in power. Patrimonialism harms state building by promoting factional competition over meager state resources, partisan distribution of such resources and consequent resentment among the left out

³⁸ Allen. (September 1995). "Understanding African Politics," 301-20.

³⁹ See Bratton and de Walle. (July 1994). "Neo-Patrimonial Regimes," 460-68; See Allen. (September 1995). "Understanding African Politics," 301-20; Szeftel. (September 2000). "Clientelism, Corruption and Catastrophe," 430-35; and Bates. (2008). *When Things Fell Apart, State Failure in Late Century Africa*, 5-29.

⁴⁰ Since such regimes are sensitive to political threats to their regimes, they attempt to demobilize voters and popular associations. In 16 out of 21 cases of transitions in Sub-Saharan Africa (November 1989-May 1991), the initiative for political reform was taken by opposition protesters. See Bratton and de Walle. (July 1994). "Neo-Patrimonial Regimes," 460-68.

⁴¹ See Allen. (September 1995). "Understanding African Politics," 301-20; Szeftel. (September 2000). "Clientelism, Corruption and Catastrophe," 430-35; and Bates. (2008). *When Things Fell Apart; State Failure in Late Century Africa*, 5-29.

groups, authoritarian politics, spoil politics, economic retardation and violence, conflict and civil war. The next section understands Afghan state making and un-making in the context of patrimonial politics.

Patrimonialism, Neo-patrimonialism and the Afghan State

Afghanistan was born a patrimonial polity. It was created in October 1747 in a Jirgah (assembly) meeting of Afghan tribal leaders, when Ahmad Shah Abdali was elected as the leader of the new tribal polity and independence was declared from the Safavids of Persia.⁴² Afghan state formation was supported by Pakhtun experiences in governance under Safavid rule and the religio-political grievances they entertained, over taxes and mistreatment at the hands of Persian administrators.⁴³ The de-facto nature of Persian control over Pakhtun and Afghan tribes, accompanied by historical precedents of successful uprisings⁴⁴ and an opportunity provided by the death of Nadir Shah, were additional contributory factors to the rise of an Afghan state.

Patrimonialism in Afghan state formation resembled the traditional patriarchal category of rulership, identified by Weber, as a hallmark of pre-capitalist forms of government, where allegiance to a leader is based on personal loyalty and traditional legitimacy.⁴⁵ It was charismatic patrimonialism; personal loyalty to the king was inspired by his charisma and traits of bravery, intelligence and tact in handling tribal affairs. Support to the ruler's person was secured through a policy of tribal accommodation; distribution of top state offices and land/jagirs to tribal chieftains,⁴⁶ and exemption from payment of land and produce taxes⁴⁷ were some benefits provided by the ruler to a selected group of tribal chieftains and their followers. Traditional patrimonialism sought obedience and legitimacy on

⁴² The opportunity for independence was provided by the assassination of Nadir Shah (Tahmasp Quli) in 1729 and Ahmad Shah was one of Nadir's army's Afghan general. For details on the Jirgah proceedings, see Misdaq, Nabi. (2006). *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and Foreign Interference*. London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 40-45; Malleson, George B. (1984). *History of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Period to the Outbreak of the War of 1878*. Peshawar: Saeed Book Bank, 272-275; and Singh, Ganda. (1959). *Ahmad Shah Durrani: Father of Modern Afghanistan*. Quetta: Gosha-e-Adab, 24-28.

⁴³ Misdaq, terms Persian agent's approach towards Pakhtuns as revengeful, condescending and paternalistic. See Misdaq. (2006). *Afghanistan*, 26.

⁴⁴ The first successful attempt at building an Afghan state was attempted against Safavid power in 1709 by Mir Wais Hotak (Ghilzai Pakhtun chief) in Kandahar.

⁴⁵ See Weber. (1970). *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, 296-97.

⁴⁶ The offices of the state were distributed among leading tribal chieftains. See for details, Gregorian, Vartan. (1969). *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 47.

⁴⁷ The non-Durrani tribes received insignificant amount of land, although, they had to provide 50-60% more soldiers than the Durrani. See Gregorian. (1969). *Emergence of Modern Afghanistan*, 46-47.

religious grounds through symbolic acts⁴⁸ and multiple invasions of India justified under claims of defending Islam against the infidels. Patrimonialism in Afghan case was paternalistic, consensual and reciprocal. It was paternalistic because the king was seen as a father figure who shared the booty of war with all who participated. It was consensual because the king consulted his Majlis (council composed of tribal chiefs) on all important issues and it was reciprocal because the favours (material and otherwise) from the king's person were reciprocated by the tribes through provision of fighting men and obedience to his person.⁴⁹

Patronage based distribution of high state offices was a common practice under most Afghan rulers. Close kinsmen (Durrani Pakhtun elite) were awarded the most prestigious offices under all rulers, including Ahmad Shah and Sher Ali,⁵⁰ who are credited with adopting a multi-ethnic accommodationist approach to government formation. A pro-Pakhtun bias in the distribution of state offices and other benefits, including exemption from taxes, not only made other groups more resentful, but also developed a fragile and limited tax base. Under Dost Muhammad, who was the immediate predecessor of Amir Sher Ali, all Majlis (Council) members with the exception of one were Muhammadzai and all provincial governors his own sons. Dost Muhammad favoured Muhammadzai tribe in distribution of state offices, but also used force against non-Durrani Ghilzai tribes for their failure to pay revenues, besides exploiting Shia-Sunni sectarian differences. Adoption of 'Amir-al-Momineen' (commander of the faithful) title and banning of un-Islamic practices paved religious legitimacy grounds for the Amir.⁵¹

The practice of keeping influential family members engaged in court affairs continued under Abdur Rehman, but as a shrewd state making move, the king's sons were not appointed as provincial governors for avoiding chances of rebellion against king's authority. Coercive centralization and a claim to divine right to legitimacy⁵² were hallmarks of Amir Abdur

⁴⁸ For example, reading of Khutba in the name of king after Friday prayers.

⁴⁹ Misdaq, calls it a relation based on consensual and reciprocal benefits-the tribes provided the troops and the king rewarded them with booties of the newly conquered lands besides their usual upkeep. See Misdaq. (2006). *Afghanistan*, 48.

⁵⁰ Amir Sher Ali, who was the second monarch (after Amir Dost Mohammad) in the line of Muhammadzai/ Barakzai rulers created a multi-ethnic cabinet, including a Prime Minister and ministers for Internal, Foreign and Treasury departments and filled other administrative and military posts from diverse ethnic backgrounds. See Gregorian. (1969). *Emergence of Modern Afghanistan*, 88.

⁵¹ See Noelle, Christine. (1997). *State and Tribe in Nineteenth-Century Afghanistan: The Reign of Amir Dost Muhammad Khan 1826-1863*. Richmond Surrey: Curzon Press, 250-76.

⁵² He called upon the people to obey him on the basis of his legitimacy and authority granted by God and rallied them for Jihad against the foreign infidels as well as local non-Muslim communities- Kafir's of Nuristan and the Shia's of Hazarajat. See Saikal, Amin. (2006). *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival*. London: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 35-36.

Rahman's reign.⁵³ Patrimonial practice of benefitting close relatives and rewarding allies continued under Musahibeen rulers. Nadir Khan's ten member cabinet comprised of very close kinsmen and other state offices were also divided among prominent tribesmen and religious leaders.⁵⁴ Zahir Shah's 1964 constitution was an interesting departure as royal family members theoretically, were barred from holding permanent public offices.⁵⁵ In practice, the king by virtue of holding the highest executive office was empowered to appoint all high state functionaries and continuation of patrimonial nepotism in appointments flourished a culture of corruption in bureaucracy and harmed the prospects of an institutionalized growth of the same. The king's prerogative to appoint the cabinet meant that a Prime Ministers' average term in office did not exceed 2-3 years, replaced by Zahir Shah as soon as he felt insecure of their growing popularity. Government's meddling in electoral results to prevent reformists entering the parliament, and frequent dismissal of Prime Ministers at the king's pleasure, gave instability to the political system. Frustration with the slow pace of democratization and patrimonial distribution of state offices and resources led the intelligentsia and reformists to organize into leftist-communist, nationalist and religious parties.⁵⁶ The Afghan bureaucracy could not develop institutionally under Zahir Shah's regime, making it susceptible to corruption and patrimonial nepotism in appointments. Economically, the state failed to create jobs for growing intelligentsia and tied to it was the dissatisfaction of radicals, both leftist and Islamist with the slow progress of reforms. A decline in foreign aid coupled with poor government response to the famine of 1972, created conditions for take-over of the government by

⁵³ For Amir's early life, accession and wars, see Sultan Mahomed Khan. (1980). ed., *The Life of Abdur Rahman: Amir of Afghanistan, Volume 1*. Karachi: Oxford University Press.

⁵⁴ The cabinet was mostly a family affair-the King was Commander-in-chief of the armed forces and his two brothers were made the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense. See Saikal. (2006). *Modern Afghanistan*, 100.

⁵⁵ Its key features included a constitutional monarchy vested with all executive authority, Islam as the state religion, a bicameral legislature with fully elected Wolesi Jirgah and partly elected Mesharano Jirgah, a bill of fundamental rights and a separate judiciary under Supreme Courts supervision, whose members were appointed by the king. See Newell, Richard S. (1972). *The Politics of Afghanistan*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 95-116.

⁵⁶ The first group to organize formally in 1965 was the leftist Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), which by 1967 split into two factions-Khalq and Parcham. For details and short biographies of the PDPA leaders, see Arnold, Anthony. (1983). *Afghanistan's Two-Party Communism Parcham and Khalq*. Stanford university, Hoover Press Publications, 15-22; Bradsher, Henry S. (1985). *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*. Durham: Duke University Press, 36-43; Misdaq. (2006). *Afghanistan*, 99-116; Najumi, Naematollah. (2002). *The Rise of Taliban in Afghanistan*. New York: Palgrave Publishers, 30-40 and Rais, Rasul Baksh. (1994). *War Without Winners: Afghanistan's Uncertain Transition after the Cold War*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 30. Islamic radicals from the Shariah Faculty of Kabul University organized into Jamiat-i-Islami. For details on Islamist movements up-to 1978, see Roy, Olivier. (1985). *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 69-83.

Daoud (in collaboration with leftist and nationalist elements of the army in July 1973). The new government after declaring Afghanistan to be a republic, disbanded the parliament, suspended the constitution and promulgated a state of emergency.

Under Musahibeen rulers, appointments in the military were subject to nepotism too because appointments above the rank of captain were exercised as kings exclusive prerogative. This meant young non-elite Pakhtuns officers found their road to promotions blocked by the favoured group of Pakhtuns with connections to the royal family,⁵⁷ which frustrated them to join radical leftist PDPA factions. Politicization of army helped the cause of Daoud's coup against Zahir Shah in 1973 and that of the PDPA against Daoud in 1978. Such politicization was responsible for harming military's discipline, but also created problems for maintaining its unity under the PDPA regime. The reign of Musahibeen rulers demonstrated half hearted attempts at state modernization and reformation by the traditional Afghan elite. While tribal loyalty was secured through patrimonial favours and continued to be the main legitimacy ground for these rulers, Pakhtun nationalism and attempts at centralization assumed autocratic characteristics. Extension of education and limited liberalization experiments propped up an intelligentsia that was soon to become radicalized because of denial in power sharing and slow pace of modernization reforms. In post 1978 period, factional competition for state resources (high military and civilian offices), resulted in infighting between Parchami and Khalqi factions and after Parcham's sidelining, personality clashes and conflict over resources within the Khalqi party invited intervention from the Soviet Union.⁵⁸ From its inception, PDPA's Khalqi and Parchami factions developed differences over the issue of distribution of important state offices, which had resulted in the Khalqi's sidelining of the Parchamis. Such factional and personality clashes over state resources also helped to defeat the cause of reforms initiated by the Khalqi government in 1978-79.⁵⁹

Patrimonialism, in short has been a regular feature of Afghan politics and was used a tool of state making by not only the monarchs, but also by

⁵⁷ See Maley, William. (2003). *The Afghanistan Wars*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 16.

⁵⁸ For the situation leading to and the motives behind Soviet invasion, see Rais. (1994) *War Without Winners*, 66-88; Amin, Tahir. (1982). *Afghanistan Crisis: Implications and Options for Muslim World, Iran and Pakistan*, Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies, 85-91; and Matinuddin, Kamal. (1991). *Power Struggle in the Hindu Kush: Afghanistan 1978-1991*. Lahore: Wajidalis Pvt. Ltd., 100-109.

⁵⁹ On reforms and their erratic implementation, see Rubin, Barnett R. (1995). *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and collapse in the International System*. New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 115-20; Arnold. (1983). *Afghanistan's Two Party*, 73-78; Saikal. (2006). *Modern Afghanistan*, 188-190; Rais. (1994). *War Without Winners*, 51-58; Bradsher. (1985). *Afghanistan*, 91-96; Guistozzi, Antonio. (2000). *War, Politics and Society in Afghanistan 1978-1992*. London: Hurst & Company, 20-32; Roy. (1985). *Islam and Resistance*, 84-97; and Newell, Nancy Peabody and Richard Newell. (1982). *The Struggle for Afghanistan*. London: Cornell University Press, 74-90.

the so called republican leaders. Patrimonialism promoted tribal and factional competition over resources distribution. Undue favours to ethnic and tribal groups created conditions for social and political unrest. Ruler's dependence on patronage resources for sustaining personal loyalty made the regimes susceptible to collapse, when patronage resources dried out. Patrimonial practices in Afghanistan proved extremely durable and hard to replace, deriving their strength from state dependence on external resources for state making and from an absence of participatory local politics (bodies) that could keep the patronage based patrimonial practices of the king in check as in European state building experience. The ethnic, factional characteristic of patrimonialism has re-surfaced in post 2001 state building exercise in Afghanistan.

Patrimonialism and Post-2001 State Building in Afghanistan

Interventionist state building in the new Millennium began in Afghanistan with the Bonn Agreement of December 2001,⁶⁰ which not only outlined the framework of an interim authority in Afghanistan, but also provided for the convening of an Emergency Loya Jirga (ELJ) to decide upon an Afghanistan Transitional Authority (ATA), a Constitutional Loya Jirga (CLJ) in 18 months for adopting a new constitution and elections within a year of the ELJ.⁶¹ It further reiterated international community's commitment to building Afghan security and armed forces and till the creation of such forces, a UN mandated security force was to assist in providing security to Kabul and adjoining areas.⁶² The more than a decade long state building process has concentrated mainly on building formal state structures and improving their cope of functions, mainly focusing on Afghan

⁶⁰ This agreement was signed as a result of UN mediation between the international coalition headed by the US and the Afghan factions siding with the invasion. See Edwards, Lucy Morgan. (December 2010). "State Building in Afghanistan: A Case Showing the Limits," *International Review of the Red Cross* 92, no 880, 4.

⁶¹ See "The Bonn Agreement 2001, Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions," accessed September 2, 2009, [http://www.unamaafg.org/docs/_nonUN%20 Docs/_International-Conferences&Forums/Bo](http://www.unamaafg.org/docs/_nonUN%20Docs/_International-Conferences&Forums/Bo).

⁶² External troops that maintained security comprised of the US military troops and UN mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which came under NATO command in April 2003. ISAF was estimated around 2010 at 135000 troops (from more than 40 countries) with US as the largest contributor and mandated to conduct counter insurgency operations, help in ANA's capacity building and provide sustainable security environment for socio-economic development and governance. See Grisson, Adam. (September 2010). "Making it up as we go along: State Building, Critical Theory and Military Adaptation in Afghanistan." *Conflict, Security and Development* 10, no. 4 "Making it up," 502.

National Security Forces (ANSF),⁶³ the Judiciary, Public Administration and the Disarmament Demobilization and Re-integration (DDR) efforts.

Patrimonialism and patronage politics has found its way into the post 2001 state building exercise in Afghanistan. Scholars note the presence of factions sponsored by rival ethnic or party leaders in the new security institutions. There are charges that rival patronage networks in the military are recruiting on ethnic or regional grounds. The two main rival patronage leaders identified in the military include, former Chief of Army Staff, Bismillah Khan, (coming from Tajik dominated Shura-e-Nazer) and Minister of Defense, Wardak.⁶⁴ The differences between the two is said to affect decisions on appointments and control of staff, resources and operations.⁶⁵ Scholars further note a friction between the Tajik and Pakhtun military officers and between the former Mujahideen (that fought against the Soviet invasion) and those officers having a root in the pro-Soviet army of the 1980s who constitute almost one-third of the total numbers in the ANA.⁶⁶ There are also reports of officer's involvement in corrupt practices, e.g., misappropriation of soldier's pay, fuel and military equipment from warehouses, and their indulgence in narcotics and other illegal businesses.⁶⁷ The factionalism in the present military is more harming than the one existing in the 70s and 80s army. It is because currently, factionalism's defining character is ethnicity and not ideological differences as present in the earlier army.⁶⁸

Patrimonial factionalism in the Ministry of Defense has limited the effectiveness of Disarmament Demobilization and Re-integration (DDR) implementation. Such factional politics was witnessed in the Jamaat-i-Islami's handling of the DDR process. This party is blamed for not only non-cooperation, but also maneuvering of DDR through selective choosing of units to be demobilized and through induction of large number of X combatants into ANP, which prevented these from being disarmed. The

⁶³ These include the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP).

⁶⁴ In 2008, Bismillah Khan commanded loyalty of 6 out of 11 brigade commanders and 12 out of a total of 46 battalion commanders; Wardak commanded loyalty from a single brigade commander and Hizb-e-Wahdat and Harkat-i-Islami had loyalty from one brigade commander and 5 battalion commanders. 4 battalion commanders were linked to General Dostum and Jumbeshi-Milli. See, Guistozzi, Antonio. (2010). "The Afghan National Army", in *The Rusi Journal* 154, no. 6, 39.

⁶⁵ See ICG. (2010). "A Force in Fragments: Reconstituting the Afghan National Army." International Crisis Group Asia Report No. 190, May 12, 2010, 12, accessed March 15, 2011, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/190%20A%20Force%20in%20Fragments%20Reconstituting%20the%20Afghan%20National%20Army.ashx>.

⁶⁶ See Guistozzi. (2010). "The Afghan National Army," 39.

⁶⁷ See Guistozzi. (2010). "The Afghan National Army," 40

⁶⁸ ICG report notes the presence of predatory relationship between commanders and soldiers and indulgence in corruption by the ANA officials in contracts and procurements. See ICG. (2011). "A Force in Fragments," 12.

exclusion of Taliban fighters from the disarmaments process also resulted from political factionalism within the Ministry of Defense.⁶⁹ Factionalism is affecting Judiciary's performance in post 2001 period. Reported factional politics in the Constitutional Commission between Niamatullah Shahrani's Salafist party and Massaud's Shura-e-Nazar is blamed for weak judicial character of the Supreme Court and its domination by the powerful executive.⁷⁰ Factionalism is afflicting judiciary at the at sub-national local nahia (urban administrative subdivision) level albeit in different forms. Influential elders at the nahia, influence the disputants to chose particular mediators for Jirga (to settle disputes informally), by virtue of exploiting their informal linkages and connections to the state actors. They act as brokers and gatekeepers between the state and aid agencies and the residents who depend on them for access to state and aid resources. These linkages assume negative proportions; using their privileges as gatekeeper's to state's resources, these informal actors influence the choice of mediators and jeopardize the built in accountability mechanisms of customary justice mechanisms.⁷¹ Additionally, interference by the executive and by powerful individuals in influencing judicial outcomes is pervasive. This is shown in reverse decisions made by the lower courts and at times, in failures to enforce judicial decisions.⁷²

The international state builder's attempts at introduction of a rationalized bureaucratic structure, especially at the sub-national level have been frustrated by patronage politics of local power holders and corruption issues.⁷³ Lister's study of Public Administration Reform (PAR) in the provinces highlights problems over abuses, related to patronage appointments. She contends that PAR reforms implementation reflects local power holders changing patterns of interaction with the Afghan state. Their new roles involve influencing the state through non military means, such as

⁶⁹ See Guistozzi, Antonio. (June 2008). "Bureaucratic Façade and Political Realities of Disarmament and Demobilization in Afghanistan." in *Conflict, Security and Development* 8, no. 2, 190.

⁷⁰ See ICG. (2010). "Reforming Afghanistan's Broken Judiciary." International Crisis Group Asia Report No 195, 17 November 2010, 10, accessed March 15, 2011, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/195%20Reforming%20Afghanistans%20Broken%20Judiciary.ashx>.

⁷¹ See TLO. (2009). "Linkages Between State and Non-State Justice Systems in Eastern Afghanistan: Evidence from Jalalabad, Nangarhar and Ahmad Aba, Paktia," Tribal Liaison Office, May 2009, 1-27, accessed May 12 2010, <http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/ROL/state-and-non-state-justice-systems-in-eastern-Afghanistan.pdf>.

⁷² See "Conference on the Relationship between State and Non-State Justice Systems in Afghanistan." (2006). Briefing Paper, Kabul, Afghanistan, December 10-14 2006.

⁷³ Corruption is so widespread that according to one estimate, \$ 2.5 billion in bribes were paid out in Afghanistan over one year 2009-amounting to a quarter of its GDP. See Canas, Vitalino. (2011). "Governance Challenges in Afghanistan: An Update." NATO Parliamentary Assembly Special Report, October 2011, 10, accessed April 5, 2012, <http://www.nato-pa.int>.

becoming parliamentarians, or provincial council members, or by engagement in organized crime through connivance of state's security agencies and its officials.⁷⁴ This reflects that patrimonialism and patronage based appointments, which had stunted the growth of bureaucratization in Afghan history is still at works in harming the cause of reformation of public administration reforms in the post 2001 period.

There are scholars who prefer to look at the ethnicity issue in Afghanistan in post 2001 period as an extension of neo-patrimonialism, clientelism and patron-client relations.⁷⁵ Between 2001 and 2004, the central government's high offices came to be almost completely dominated by Tajik and Uzbek dominated Northern Alliance, which had helped the US to win the 2001 invasion. This problem of Pakhtun alienation (from the East and South) and that of Shia Hazaras (from the centre) was highlighted by several scholars. Starr, notes an immediate legitimacy crisis for the interim government because of disappointment among the Pakhtuns for being sidelined in state building attempts. It manifested in refusal by locals to cooperate with state administrators in the North East and North Central regions and resurgence of Taliban influence in these areas.⁷⁶ Wimmer and Schetter, argue about state's legitimacy being challenged through regional domination of the Panjsheri troika (Younus Qanuni, Abdullah Abdullah and Muhammad Fahim) and to the appointment of non-Pakhtuns to important state offices.⁷⁷ This happened despite the fact that the interim cabinet that took office on December 22, 2001 was headed by Hamid Karzai, a Popalzai Pakhtun⁷⁸ and included representation to reflect the ethnic composition of the population.⁷⁹ Attempts were made in post 2004 period to form a broad base representation of all ethnicities by creating new ministries (not aligned with the Northern Alliance) and also replacing lower government staff, half of the provincial governors and three quarters of all local police chiefs with locals enjoying legitimacy in their areas.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ See Lister, Sarah. (July 2009). "Changing the Rules? State building and Local Government in Afghanistan." *Journal of Development Studies* 45, no. 6 (July 2009): 990-1009.

⁷⁵ See Schetter, Conrad. (2003). "Ethnicity and Political Reconstruction in Afghanistan". Joint CSP/ZEF (Bonn) Symposim, 30 May- 1 June 2003, Bonn, Germany. Accessed March 16, 2010, <http://www.ag-afghanistan.de/arg/arp/schetter.pdf>

⁷⁶ See Starr, Frederick S. (2006). "Sovereignty and legitimacy in Afghan Nation Building," in Francis Fukuyama, ed., *Nation Building, Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*. Baltimore, M.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 107-124.

⁷⁷ Wimmer, Andreas and Conrad Schetter. (2003). "Putting State Formation First: Some Recommendations for Reconstruction and Peace-Making in Afghanistan," *Journal of International Development* 15, 530.

⁷⁸ Hamid Karzai, is a Popalzai Durrani, like the Afghan state founder-Ahmad Shah Durrani.

⁷⁹ It included 11 Pakhtuns, 8 Tajiks, 5 Hazaras and 3 Uzbeks. See Johnson, Thomas H. (March-June 2006). "Afghanistan's Post-Taliban Transition: the State of the State-building after the War." *Central Asian Survey* 25, 8.

⁸⁰ See Starr. (2006). "Sovereignty and Legitimacy," 107-24.

Ethnic and regional imbalance in composition as well as recruitment of the security forces abounded in the initial years of state building. Ethnic representation figures in various reports show Tajiks over represented in relation to their population figures, whereas Pakhtuns roughly equal to their population figures and Hazara and Uzbek groups lesser in numbers than their population estimates.⁸¹ ICG report also cites regional imbalance in ethnic representation among the officer corps, e.g., in Zabul, though 95 % of the population is Pakhtun, but 75 % of the officer corps is Tajik. In such circumstances, allegations of favouritism are rampant.⁸² The policy of ethnic underrepresentation in the make-up of the new government in post 2001 period is seen by scholars as an extension of clientelist and patron client networks in the country.⁸³ It is also historically a challenging position because prior to 2001, Pakhtun elite have traditionally dominated the government and have been the major recipients of patrimonial favours by the various monarchs and Amirs.

Conclusions

Patrimonialism has been a permanent feature of state making in Afghanistan. It was embedded in the very character of the state when it was born in October 1747. The reason was obvious; it came into being as a tribal creation and as a tribal polity.⁸⁴ Its very survival depended on tribal elder's loyalty to the monarch, which was retained through special privileges and favours flowing through the King. In that manner, patrimonialism performed an important function of providing stability to the nascent empire. But the foundation of such a system's stability lay on precarious grounds. Loyalty to the king's person were retained through perks and privileges, however, any decline in resources to patronage groups resulted in immediate withdrawal of loyalty resulting in conflict and war. This happened in the Sadozai as well as Mohammadzai reign. Regime dependence on patrimonial support

⁸¹ See Younossi, Obaid., Peter Dehl Thruelsen, Jonathan Vaccaro, Jerry M Solinger and Brian Grady. (2009). "The Long march: Building an Afghan National Army." Santa Monica, CA., Rand Corporation Report, 22. The ICG report gives recent ethnic representation figures in ANA as: Pakhtun: 42 %, Tajik: 40 %, and 18% Hazaras, Uzbeks and other minorities. See "A Force in Fragments," 20.

⁸² ICG. (2010). "A Force in Fragments," 20.

⁸³ Schetter, for example, argues against the approach of looking at Afghanistan's problems through an ethnic lens and considers ethnic factionalism as an element and extension of neo-patrimonialism. He also calls upon the state builders to treat the ethnicity issue in a discrete manner, because publicizing it refuels ethnicity issues and obligates the warlords as well as politicians to play upon the ethnic card. See Schetter. (2003). "Ethnicity".

⁸⁴ The very mechanism through which Ahmad Shah was appointed as the new Amir and independence declared was the tribal institution of Jirgah.

prevented the growth of constitutionalism and stunted bureaucratization. It also gave a very fragile tax base to the Afghan economy and made other groups resentful towards special privileges of Pakhtun tribes and elders. Patronage politics also defeated the cause of modernization and reformation of the system. Politicization of the military and frustration with preferential treatment of regime loyalists found expression in radicalization of the society into leftist and rightist ideologies. Factional fighting over distribution of state resources acted as a prelude to Soviet invasion and subsequent conflict, war and state failure in Afghanistan.

Patrimonialism as an informal institution has been highly resistant to change and has found its way into the post 2001 state building exercise. It has assumed party and ethnicity based factionalism characteristics. The army, for example, is discredited with charges of rival patronage factions, belonging to different parties influencing recruitments, staffing and resource allocation decisions. This factional competition is credited with slow implementation of the DDR reforms and with weakening the judicial character of the Supreme Court. At the sub-national level also, introduction of bureaucratization reforms were frustrated by patronage politics of local power holders and strongmen. These strongmen have discovered new ways of influencing the Afghan state, by electing themselves to the parliament and by engaging in organized crimes through collusion with state security higher ups and officials. Ethnic and regional imbalances abound in the composition and recruitment of security forces with rampant allegations of favouritism resulting in fueling ethnic tensions and creating legitimacy deficit for the interim and post interim set-up.

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FALSE EITHER OR: A FALLACIOUS ARGUMENTATIVE STRATEGY IN THE CONTEXT OF WAR IN GENERAL AND THE WAR ON TERROR IN AFGHANISTAN IN PARTICULAR

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Abstract

This article argues that false either or (false dilemma, false bifurcation, false dichotomy) is a commonly committed fallacy in the context of war in general and the War on Terror in Afghanistan in particular. It mainly focuses on the discourse that was generated soon after the incidents of 9/11. Committing this fallacy, the politicians/leaders presented an oversimplified picture of the situation portraying that the war can simply be understood as a struggle between two choices: a good choice and a bad choice. This argumentative strategy played an instrumental role in persuading public for war and in blocking criticism and rational thinking. Moreover, after 9/11, this fallacious argumentative strategy restricted any alternative leading to peace through negotiations. Furthermore, in the context of 9/11 this fallacy was repeated over and over again for framing purpose. The entailment effects of this framing had been: the world has been divided into two halves, there is no neutral ground: not siding one will put a person/institution/nation in the other half.

Key Words: Argumentative Strategy, Fallacy, Framing, War

Understanding False Either Or/ False Dilemma

This fallacious argumentative move occurs when an arguer offers an incomplete range of alternatives, normally two, in such a way that it appears as if no other alternative exists, and then one is asked to opt for one of them. If one chooses one of them, it is tantamount to accept that these choices are the only choices and no other alternatives are available. Madsen Pirie

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defines it as,

*The presentation of only two alternatives where others exist is called the fallacy of bifurcation... it presents an 'either/or' situation when in reality there is a range of options.*¹

A false dilemma is not always fallacious. If the offered choices/alternatives are the only alternatives and one has to choose one, then the dilemma is not false. However, if other alternatives exist then the dilemma is false. The following examples will make the point straight:

Either 'A is equal to B' or 'A is not equal to B'

It is not the case that 'A is equal to B'

Therefore, 'A is not equal to B' - is valid. (Disjunctive Syllogism)

However,

Either today is Monday or today is Tuesday

Today is not Monday

Therefore, today is Tuesday-Commits fallacy of false either or.

The problem in the second argument is, 'today is Monday' and 'today is Tuesday' are not the only alternatives; there are other alternatives too. Both the statements will be false if 'today is Friday' or any other day.

It is a commonly committed fallacy in political discourse when arguments are forwarded presenting limited alternatives/choices; usually one of the alternative/choice is preferred by the arguer.

Hurley opines,

*...in most cases the arguer expresses only the disjunctive premise and leaves it to the reader or listener to supply the missing statement...*²

Love Pakistan or leave Pakistan.

Either it is white or black.

You are with us or against us.

All commits fallacy of false either or.

False Either Or/ False Dilemma in The Context of War in General

The following discussion aims to establish that false either or is a commonly committed fallacy in the context of war in general and the war on terror in particular. Committing this fallacy, politicians (people at the helm of affairs) attempt to persuade people that there are only two choices/alternatives/policies, ignoring the rest of the choices/alternatives/policies, and then they argue for one of the choice claiming that it is the right choice.

¹ Pirie, M., *How to Win Every Argument: The Use and Abuse of Logic*. Continuum International Publishing Group, 2006, p 19.

² Hurley, P. J., *A Concise Introduction to Logic*. Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2003, p 153.

To begin with an argument forwarded by President Roosevelt is taken into account.

*All of us Americans, of all opinions, are faced with the choice between the kind of world we want to live in and the kind of world which Hitler and his hordes would impose upon us.*³

The President argued that all American people, whatever their opinion may be, have only two choices: either to live in a world they want to live in or to live in a world which is dominated by Hitler and his gang. The argument presents an oversimplified picture: we are left with only two choices- either fight and defeat Hitler or do not fight (perhaps, as critics were suggesting) and be dominated by Hitler. As if there is no other option. The most possible entailment effect of the argument may be: people who do not support the war and are in favor of negotiations/peace actually want Hitler to conquer us and impose his world on us. Arguing this way, politicians attempt to block criticism.

Hitler, while declaring war on America, argued that fighting this war is a great duty. He informed Germans about provocative steps taken by the President of America. Germany does not want war with America, it is America who is waging war on Germany and Germans should stand and teach America a lesson, he argued:

*But anybody who tries to evade this duty has no claim to be regarded in our midst as a fellow German. Just as we were unmercifully hard in our struggle for power we shall be unmercifully hard in the struggle to maintain our nation. At a time when thousands of our best men are dying nobody must expect to live who tries to depreciate the sacrifices made at the Front. Immaterial under what camouflage he tries to disturb this German Front, to undermine the resistance of our people, to weaken the authority of the regime, to sabotage the achievements of the Home Front, he shall die for it!*⁴

The unstated premise in this argument is: this war is a duty. Fighting this war, for Germans, is performing national duty: either one is performing this great duty or one is avoiding it. Moreover, anybody who escapes from this war will not be considered a German- this excludes critics from the class of Germans and, perhaps, put them in the class of enemies. Moreover, this argument involves a clear threat for those, who in anyway, devalue the 'sacrifices made at the front'. All those Germans, who are not with Hitler in

³ Roosevelt, F., *The Forward March Of Hitler And Of Hitlerism Can Be Stopped -- And It Will Be Stopped*. 1941. Retrieved from <http://www.usmm.org/fdr/kearny.html>, accessed on 16/03/2010

⁴ Hitler, R., *Declaration of war on US*. 1941. Retrieved from http://www.famousquotes.me.uk/speeches/Adolf_Hitler/index.htm, accessed on 4/03/2010.

this war actually: disturb German Front, weaken the resistance of German people, weaken the authority of the regime and damage the achievements of the Home Front. They are traitors and do not want Germans to win the war against her enemies who want to destroy Germany and the whole Europe. They shall die for it (read, shall be killed). This argument also involves a clear appeal to force.

Richard Nixon explaining his Vietnam policy, argued:

*.... we really only have two choices open to us if we want to end this war. I can order an immediate, precipitate withdrawal of all Americans from Vietnam without regard to the effects of that action. Or we can persist in our search for a just peace through a negotiated settlement if possible, or through continued implementation of our plan for Vietnamization if necessary -- a plan in which we will withdraw all of our forces from Vietnam on a schedule in accordance with our program, as the South Vietnamese become strong enough to defend their own freedom. I have chosen the second course. It is not the easy way. It is the right way. It is a plan which will end the war and serve the cause of peace -- not just in Vietnam but in the Pacific and in the world. In speaking of the consequences of a precipitate withdrawal, I mentioned that our allies would lose confidence in America.....*⁵

Many fallacies have been committed in this argument. The context of this argument is that the President wants to change American policy regarding Vietnam. Although, the President has committed that America will keep on supporting her allies but instead of committing more troops and staying long in Vietnam he wants to train South Vietnamese to fight their own war to save their freedom- Vietnamization. He puts forth this argument: to convince people for his policies, to demonstrate that America is not losing Vietnam War and to silence the critics.

Following analysis of the argument makes it clear that President Nixon in the aforementioned script argued that America is left with only two choices:

All American immediately, precipitately, withdraw from Vietnam, without thinking of the effects that action can produce.

Or

Through negotiations, search for a just peace, if possible, or through Vietnamization make South Vietnamese stronger, enabling them to defend their own freedom, if necessary.

Obviously the first choice is not acceptable, since wisdom demands that people first see the effects and then go for a choice and the effect of the first

⁵ Nixon, R., *Vietnamization: War in Vietnam Speech, address to the Nation*. November 3, 1969. Retrieved from http://www.famousquotes.me.uk/speeches/Richard_Nixon/2.htm, accessed on 4/03/210.

choice is, 'allies will lose confidence in America'- appeal to bad consequence; this rules out the first choice. Conceivably, a large number of citizenry will go for the second one. Second choice also comprises two choices. The first one is negotiations. Although it seems to be the best one, but the President has already ruled out negotiations.⁶ Hence, the President concluded that the only choice left is Vietnamization, which he believes, is the 'right way', otherwise, the allies of America will lose confidence in America- Appeal to bad/negative consequences⁷. Any criticism against the President's policy would mean: the critic does not want the 'right way', and wants American allies to lose confidence in America- poisoning the well.⁸ Moreover, the President, committing fallacy of appeal to good consequences argued that his policy will bring peace in Pacific and in the world.

This brief discussion reveals that false either is a common argumentative strategy in the context of war.

False Either Or in the Context of the War on Terror in Afghanistan

As discussed earlier false either or is a common fallacy in times of war. In the context of the War on Terror this fallacious argumentative strategy was instrumental in persuading public for war and in blocking criticism. Moreover, after 9/11, it restricted any alternative leading to peace through negotiations.

Osama and his followers, after 9/11, argued again and again that the world has been divided into two halves: believers and infidels. They claimed that it is the religious duty of all the Muslims to take part in jihad against America. For example, on 7th October 2001 Osama argued that,

*These events have divided the whole world into two sides. The side of believers and the side of infidels...*⁹

The argument had been: after 9/11 the world has been divided into two sides: believers and infidels, perhaps there is no neutral ground- one cannot remain neutral. Since Osama is fighting infidels, those who are not on Osama's side are actually siding infidels- they are infidels too. This reveals that only two choices are available: Be a believer and fight the other side or do not fight the other side and be an infidel. Moreover, if one is not fighting for Osama s/he is supposed to be fighting against him for these are the only two choices. Such argumentation ignores/suppresses other alternatives

⁶ Retrieved from http://www.famousquotes.me.uk/speeches/Richard_Nixon/2.htm

⁷ In an argument from negative consequences, instead of providing logical reasoning, it is argued that accepting/rejecting the conclusion may lead to negative consequences.

⁸ Poisoning the well is a pre emptive type of attack. For example, 'only a fool will disagree with this argument'. Such argumentative strategy attempts to block rational and critical thinking.

⁹ Osama Bin Laden, Osama Bin Laden Speeches, October 7, 2001: Retrieved from <http://www.september11news.com/OsamaSpeeches.htm> , accessed on 22/01/2010.

including the possibility of remaining neutral. It also persuades people for war and blocks criticism.

The most crucial entailment effect of this argumentative strategy is that it blocks the possibility of any neutral party- A party that can bring the opponents on a negotiation table. Perhaps, this was the reason that after 9/11 even states like Pakistan and Saudi Arabia could not play the role of neutral negotiators and could not stop the War on Terror in Afghanistan.

The only country that can be declared an Islamic state, according to Osama, is Afghanistan for he informed,

*Only Afghanistan is an Islamic country. Pakistan follows the English law. I don't consider Saudi Arabia an Islamic country.*¹⁰

The only place, in the whole world, ruled by believers is Afghanistan. This framing excludes even Pakistan and Saudi Arabia from the land of believers.

In the same interview he said,

*Right now a great war of Islamic history is being fought in Afghanistan. All the big powers are united against Muslims.*¹¹

War had been persuasively defined as, 'a great war of Islamic history'- the fairy tale is that the world has been divided into two halves: the big powers (read enemies of Muslims) on one side and Muslims on the other. Either one is a Muslim or an enemy of Muslims, was the dilemma before the people. However, the truth had been that many Muslim countries were against his policies and actually they were in the other half.

In the same interview, Osama further argued that even the Muslim scholars have been divided into two groups: those who support infidels for their personal gains and those who are true scholars who support Jihad against America. The dilemma was: either one is a true scholar supporting him/ Jihad on America or a fake scholar supporting and helping infidels for personal gains. A very effective argument to silence criticism that was coming from the scholars who were against him, since entailment effect of this argument was: the scholars who do not support Jihad against America are actually motivated by their personal gains; a true Muslim should not listen to them.

President Bush and his allies committed this fallacy, in the context of the War on Terror in Afghanistan, for a number of purposes such as: Making a grand coalition; threatening those countries reluctant to join coalition i.e., wanted to remain neutral; to declare pro war policies of US good/heroic; declaring US enemies terrorist/evil and the critics friends of terrorists etc. Moreover, this fallacy was committed over and over again for framing

¹⁰ Mir, H., Osama Claims He Has Nukes: If US Uses N- Bombs It Will Get Same Response, In *The Daily Dawn*. Karachi, dated 10/11/2001 retrieved from www.dawn.com , accessed on 22/11/2009.

¹¹ Ibid.

purpose¹². The framing effect was instrumental in persuading people that the world has been divided into two halves and there is no neutral ground, hence, no nation can remain neutral.

Winkler in *Encroachments on state Sovereignty: The Argumentation Strategies of the Bush Administration* opines, after 9/11 President Bush presented only two alternatives to Taliban: either to become an ally of US or Al- Qaeda, erasing the possibility of a compromise solution as an alternative. President Bush and his team, he argues, using arguments by association and dissociation provided Taliban a choice to either hand over Osama and all other terrorists or they will be treated as friends of terrorists.¹³ Moreover, these choices were not open to negotiations.¹⁴

President Bush not only used 'either or' for other nations of the world, he used the same for American citizenry too. Dianna Taylor informs that the President presented two choices before American people: evil or lesser evil. Not joining President Bush was dubbed as evil and joining the President meant compromising civil liberties and violence in the name of national security- lesser evil.¹⁵

Robert Ivie and Oscar Giner opine that the President had been arguing that the alternative of fighting and defeating evil enemy is,

... *submitting to evil, to become evil, to be exposed to evil.*¹⁶

The following discourse that was generated soon after 9/11 has been taken into account to show the way false either or was committed and was framed in the context of the War on Terror in Afghanistan.

On September 20, 2001, President Bush argued,

*Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make.
Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.*¹⁷

It is a false either or: either you are with America or with Terrorists. No country can remain neutral, he argued, as if there is no other alternative. In

¹² According to George Lakoff repeating a frame, over and over again, reinforces it. For more details see *Simple Framing*: available online on <http://www.rockridgeinstitute.org/index.html>, accessed on 10/12/2007

¹³ Winkler, C. K., *Encroachments on state Sovereignty: The Argumentation Strategies of the Bush Administration*. Argumentation Springer Science, 2008. Accessed on 23/30/2008.

¹⁴ Bush, King of Jordan: "We Will Stand Behind You": September 28, 2001. Retrieved from <http://2001-2009.state.gov/coalition/cr/rm/2001/5114.htm>

¹⁵ Dianna, T., Responsibility And/In Crises, In Presbey Gail M. Ed. *Philosophical Perspectives on the War on Terrorism*. Rodopi Amsterdam, New York 2007.

¹⁶ Ivie, R. and Oscar, G., Hunting the Devil: Democracy's Rhetorical Impulse to War, In *Presidential Studies*, Quarterly, December, 2007. Accessed on 3/04/2008.

Lakoff in *Moral Politics* reveals that conservatives, who follow strict father morality, believe that it is immoral to remain weak in the face of evil. "someone who is morally weak cannot stand up to evil and so eventually commit evil" p. 71- 77.

¹⁷ Bush, J.W., *Address to a Joint Session of the Congress and the American People*: September 20, 2001.

reality, there existed several other alternatives, such as: a country might have been against Taliban but could have advocated settling of the dispute through diplomatic means; a country could have been an enemy of US but not a friend of Taliban and a country could have opposed both US and Taliban's policies etc. But the President ignored all other alternatives. In the context of 9/11, this fallacious argument also involved an appeal to force/threat. America was going to root out terrorists of the global reach. If a country was not a part of coalition, then Americans would consider her a part of Axis of Evil. And if a country was a part of Axis of Evil then she would face the consequences.

Tony Blair on October 2, 2001 argued,

*There is no compromise possible with such people, no meeting of minds, no point of understanding with such terror. Just a choice: defeat it or be defeated by it. And defeat it we must.*¹⁸

The argument is, since, there is nothing common between civilized people and terrorist; hence, terrorist cannot be argued with, no compromise with them is possible- no negotiation is possible. Moreover, Committing false either or, he argued: either we will defeat them or will be defeated. This fallacious reasoning was very persuasive in the context of 9/11. The message had been that the civilized world cannot afford a defeat. The terrorists were framed to be evil, murderers, ruthless, irrational preying on innocent people, so a defeat by terrorist would put the whole civilized world under the dominance of terror and evil. This way PM Blair attempted to gain support of his public to wage war on Afghanistan and to defeat the terrorists. Anyone criticizing him would be supporting the terrorists.

President Bush on October 4, 2001 once again committed false either or. However, this time he presented limited choice to banks and financial institutes too:

*...nations which understand that what happened in New York and Washington could happen to them, as well.... we don't care how you help, just help. Either you're for us, or you're against us. we're talking to countries and banks and financial institutions, and saying either you're with us, or against us: cut off their money.*¹⁹

Once again, either you are with us or against us- The President extended his doctrine to banks and financial institutions too. Here one can notice an appeal to fear and bad consequences too: what happened to American cities could happen to any other cities of the world. President Bush presented a scenario that world is in danger. An evil force wants to capture the whole world. Nations of the world have only two choices- either to join President

¹⁸ Blair,T., Tuesday 2 October, 2001. Retrieved from www.guardian.co.uk, accessed on 24/09/2009.

¹⁹ Bush,J.W., *President Unveils Back to Work Plan*. October 4, 2001.

Bush or to join Al Qaeda and Taliban. And those who do not join the President there will be a consequence- Appeal to force.

Not only President Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair, but other members of Bush's administration too were busy generating such arguments. Pervez Musharraf, then President of Pakistan, writes in his book: He and the DG ISI were warned by Colin Powell and Richard Armitage respectively, to either join America or face the consequences. Richard Armitage further warned DG ISI, Pervez Musharraf writes, if we decide not to join USA then we will be bombed back to Stone Age.²⁰

President Bush Connected this fallacious reasoning with good versus evil and other fairy tales. In *Good versus Evil: Argument to Begin Global War on Terrorism*, Sarfraz Khan and Shuja Ahmad argue framing the argument as Good versus Evil ensued other logical fallacies. Moreover, not joining 'good' was not an option for the good people of the world.²¹

The President of the United States of America argued:

*We've said, not only join the coalition, we've said here's what we expect you to do. Here is your assignment.... We expect if you're on our team, that we want your performance. And it's making a difference... This is a war between good and evil... we expect other nations to join us.... This is not a war between our world and their world. It is a war to save the world.*²²

The argument has been, join President Bush, show performance, and do what the President wants you to do, for he is fighting evil. It is a war that will save the world- a fairy tale that was instrumental in making a coalition. In this speech President Bush's language seems to be very authoritative and demanding. One can notice this from the metaphor of 'assignment'. Although, he claimed that terrorists have attacked America because America has been the beacon of freedom and democracy, yet, the President very undemocratically directed other nations: what to do? In case, if a country failed to take the 'assignment', it would fall into the class of evil. Consequently, to save the world from evil, America and allies were to fight and defeat such a country. George Lakoff reveals that conservatives, who follow strict father morality, believe that it is immoral to remain weak in the face of evil.

*Someone who is morally weak cannot stand up to evil and so eventually commit evil.*²³

²⁰ Musharraf, P., *In the Line of Fire*. Simon & Schuster, UK 2006, p 201.

²¹ Khan, S., and Ahmad, S., *Good versus Evil: Argument to Begin Global War on Terrorism*, In *Central Asia*, no.64. Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar, Peshawar 2009.

²² Bush, J.W., *President Directs Humanitarian Aid To Afghanistan*. October 4, 2001.

²³ Lakoff, G., *Moral Politics- What Conservatives Know That Liberals Don't*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1996, p 73.

On October 6, 2001, President Bush argued,

*The United States is presenting a clear choice to every nation: Stand with the civilized world, or stand with the terrorists. And for those nations that stand with the terrorists, there will be a heavy price.*²⁴

Just one day before attacking Afghanistan, the President presented a clear choice to every nation. Joining President Bush would mean joining the civilized world and not joining the President would mean joining terrorists- A classical example of false dilemma. Besides false dilemma, one can notice a blatant threat- he was appealing to force too: if any country decides not to join the coalition she will have to pay a heavy price.

Perhaps, all these arguments shaped the judgment of the nations, for on October 7, the day the actual war started, the President confidently announced,

*We are joined in this operation by our staunch friend, Great Britain. Other close friends, including Canada, Australia, Germany and France, have pledged forces as the operation unfolds. More than 40 countries in the Middle East, Africa, Europe and across Asia have granted air transit or landing rights. Many more have shared intelligence. We are supported by the collective will of the world.*²⁵

Actually every nation had to choose between America and the terrorists, according to the President, and they opted for America. Perhaps, it was easier fighting Taliban than America. It seems the President's fallacious arguments made nations of the world think and act the way the President wanted them too.

The President on the same day again informed the world about his future plan:

*Today we focus on Afghanistan, but the battle is broader. Every nation has a choice to make. In this conflict, there is no neutral ground.*²⁶

The President clearly informed that the battle is broader. Probably, it will extend to other nations who did not join President Bush, for the President had been arguing again and again (for framing purpose): either you are with us or with terrorist, sponsors of outlaws, murderers and killers of innocent people. Moreover, if any country is not with US, there is a heavy price to pay- attack by USA. This argumentative strategy was also instrumental in silencing critics for criticizing President Bush's doctrine would imply supporting terrorists, outlaws, murderers, evil and villain.

²⁴ Bush, J.W., *Radio Address of the President to the Nation*, October 6, 2001.

²⁵ Bush, J.W., *Presidential Address to the Nation*. October 7, 2001.

²⁶ Bush, J.W., *Radio Address to the Nation*. October 7, 2001.

President Bush and his team kept on committing this fallacy even after October 7, 2001.

*We gave that regime a choice: Turn over the terrorists, or face your ruin. They chose unwisely.*²⁷

Another example of same argumentative strategy coupled with an appeal to force. There are no other options such as: international law, negotiations, diplomacy and involvement of a third country. The choice is either 'black or white' as if there is no other color. If the regime i.e., Taliban do not do the way the President wants them to, they will be choosing unwisely. The price of this 'unwise' choice will be their ruin- Appeal to force.

*I will put every nation on notice that these duties involve more than sympathy or words. No nation can be neutral in this conflict, because no civilized nation can be secure in a world threatened by terror.*²⁸

Once again President's tone seemed to be very authoritative, he no more wants sympathy he wants actions. He wants nations to do 'these duties'. The President wants to make this world a safer place- a world where every nation is civilized (civilized in President's sense of the term). Besides appeal to force and false dilemma, here, he also committed fallacy of bad consequences - Any nation remaining neutral against terrorists will be threatened by terror.

Tony Blair also committing fallacy of bad consequences argued in almost the same manner:

*Whatever the dangers of the action we take, the dangers of inaction are far, far greater.*²⁹

In the context of 9/11 this small argument informed the public that if we do not wage war on Afghanistan then in future we will face greater dangers; therefore, it is in our best interest to wage war otherwise we will face bad consequences.

False either or was also instrumental in the War on Iraq. For example, President Bush on September 23, 2003, while addressing UN general assembly argued:

Events during the past two years have set before us the clearest of divides: between those who seek order, and those who spread chaos; between those who work for peaceful change, and those who adopt the methods of gangsters; between those who honor the rights of man, and those who deliberately take the lives of men and women and children without mercy or shame. Between these alternatives

²⁷ Bush, J.W., *President Pays Tribute at Pentagon Memorial*. October 11, 2001

²⁸ Bush, J.W., *No Nation can be Neutral in This Conflict*. November 6, 2001

²⁹ Tony Blair speech's. Tuesday 2 October, 2001. Retrieved from www.guardian.co.uk, accessed on 24/09/2009.

*there is no neutral ground.*³⁰

The world has been divided into two clearest halves and there is no neutral ground between: those seeking order and those spreading chaos; those working for peace and those for gangsters; those who honor man's rights and those taking lives of innocent women and children. This reveals that the President and his allies seek order, work for peace and honor and rights of man. They are fighting gangsters, those spreading chaos and killing innocent people without mercy. Since, there is no neutral ground; therefore, either you are on the President's side or with the terrorists. Those who criticize the President's policies are also on the other side- on the side of terrorists. Moreover, it is useless to talk and negotiate with 'gangsters' and those who 'spread chose' and take lives of 'innocent woman and children'.

Conclusion

This discussion reveals that false either or is a commonly committed fallacy in times of war in general and the War on Terror in particular. In the War on Terror, both sides committed this fallacy many times to persuade people for war and to block criticism and rational thinking. This fallacious argumentative strategy helped politicians/leaders presenting an oversimplified picture of the situation that portrayed that the war can simply be understood as a struggle between two choices: a good choice and a bad choice. It appeared that the whole world has been divided into two halves and the right choice is to side and stay in one of the halves. Moreover, after 9/11, this fallacious argumentative strategy restricted any alternative leading to peace through negotiations for any alternative that could have led to negotiations was not presented. Furthermore, in the context of 9/11 this fallacy was repeated over and over again for framing purpose. The entailment effects of this framing had been: the world has been divided into two halves and there is no neutral ground, hence; not siding one will put a person/institution/nation in the other half. Since one of the sides was arguing that not fighting this war will make one infidel and the other side was arguing that not fighting this war will make one terrorist; perhaps, the public had to choose and decide: Either they are infidels or terrorist.

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³⁰ Bush, J.W., *President Bush Addresses United Nations General Assembly*. September 23, 2003.

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INDIA AND BRITISH IMPERIALISM: DEFENDING THE FRONTIERS OF INDIA (1801-1838)

Salman Bangash*

Introduction

International conflicts are neither random inexplicable nor bizarre. They are extremely structured and arise from well-established international rivalries. The main bone of contention and conflict of interest between the rival states are territory, influence, status, and ideology. The amalgamation of potential danger, cognitive inflexibilities, and domestic political developments make strategic competition a powerful dynamic in world politics. During much of the nineteenth century the British government was obsessed and gripped by its apprehension of threats to the Indian sub-continent from European rivals such as the French and the Russians. India was one of Great Britain prize-worth possessions. India was not only important due to her own riches rather it was the base from where Britain established political and mercantile relationships with many states in Asia and Africa. The British could not afford to lose India. For this very reason the protection and security of India became the major component of the British foreign policy in order to safeguard the “Golden Sparrow” from its European rivals such as France under Napoleon Bonaparte and Czarist Russia which was strengthening its position by its policy of invasion and subjugation of Caucasus and Central Asia. This paper would critically evaluate the British concerns and its strategy to protect India from its European rivals in the just decade of the 19th century.

The Age of European Imperialism

From a world chronological and historical perception, the most perceptible development in the 19th century was the dominance and supremacy of Europeans over Non-Europeans. While empires have risen and fallen across the world since antiquity, imperialism assumed a unique form and occupied a paradoxical position in modernity. Modern imperialism was

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unique, because state powers centred in Europe, for the first time claimed to govern day to day affairs of far flung but non-contiguous territories and the peoples who inhabited them. Western Imperialism reached its pinnacle in the last 30 years of the 19th century when most of Asia and Africa was colonised by rival European powers. No part of the globe, nonetheless remote and inaccessible from them, was free from their preachers, entrepreneurs, explorers and adventurers.¹ The European powers defended colonialism politically and morally with claims that Christian influences would civilize and enlighten the “savage” people who were conquered. It was the ‘responsibility of the civilized’ to govern the inferior races. Imperialism was intently defined as the ideological justification of colonialism. Almost all definitions of imperialism referred to the coercive amalgamation and incorporation of territories, along with their economies, social formations, and political systems, into wider structures of power dominated by foreigners. According to P.T. Moon imperialism means “domination of non-European native races by totally dissimilar European nations.”²

A variety of causes on modern day imperialism were identified by the scholars such as Great Power rivalries, military, technological and industrial superiority, and maritime advantages. Similarly imperialism was rationalised in terms of such concepts as *the White Man's Burden*³ and the mission *civilisatrice*. Queries like how was all this possible? The ways and means, by which Empire was controlled and guarded, as well as the consequences and cost generated a vast literature. Political thinkers either justified or

¹ *The New Imperialism*. Retrieved from <http://www.suu.edu/faculty/ping/pdf/TheNewImperialism.pdf>, accessed on 12/03/210. By the end of 19th century, European Powers occupied and colonised 90 percent of the African continent, 99 percent of the Pacific region, 57 percent of Asia, and almost the whole of Australia. Great Britain gained the greatest amount of colonised territory followed by France, Belgium, and the Netherlands; Germany and Italy were later entrants in the colonising races.(See Pitzl, G.R., *Imperialism*, In *Encyclopedia of World Poverty*. Retrieved from http://www.sageereference.com/worldpoverty/Article_n339.html, accessed on March 12, 2010)

² Moon, P. T., *Imperialism and World Politics*. The Macmillan Company, New York 1926, p 33.

³ Rudyard Kipling in his famous poem, “The White Man’s Burden”, which he wrote in 1899, summed up in half a dozen verses the whole case in favour of imperial expansion.

*Take up the White Man's Burden
Send forth the best ye breed.
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captive's needs;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild
Your new-caught sullen peoples,
Half-naked-devil and half child*

(see Kipling, R., *The White Man's Burden*. Retrieved from http://www.kipling.org.uk/poems_burden.htm, accessed on 10/05/2010.

contested the systematic political inequalities between metropolitan powers and colonies.⁴

What was British Imperialism?

The British Empire was the most extensive and powerful of the modern European Empires. It is therefore hardly surprising that it has been the subject of great intellectual controversy. Questions have long been pondered why and how the British were able to accumulate and built up such a potent and powerful empire? And how they managed to supplant and step into the shoes of the Spanish, Portuguese and the Dutch Empires in the 17th and 18th centuries and successfully thwart and frustrated the French, Russian and German challenges over the 19th and early 20th centuries? For some, British imperialism was like an epoch in the annals of British history⁵, but for others it was “essentially immoral.”⁶

Since the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the necessity for protection and defence and the pursuit for prosperity and affluence forced the British to draw into the wider world. At its peak, the British Empire was one of the biggest and strongest empires that the world had ever recognized and accredited, determining the politics of the world. It was often said that “the sun never sets on the British Empire”.⁷ Britain was, as Helford J. Mackinder, had once put it, ‘the centre of the world’.⁸

In the nineteenth century British imperialism was considered by many as a vehicle for enlightenment and civilization and was accordingly something to be proud of. But interestingly imperialism was never clearly defined, and it was never one monolithic idea, or process: ultimately, the British Empire represented different things to different people. This variety meant that ‘the trajectory of British Imperialism did not fit precisely and specifically any single ‘model’ of economic, military, cultural or political theory of Empire.’⁹ British Imperialism was based on Greed, patriotism, nationalism, jingoism, militarism, navalism, Christianity, humanitarianism,

⁴ For detail study of western Imperialism see David B. A., *The Dynamics of Global Dominance*. Yale University Press, New Haven 2000; Harvey, D., *The New Empire*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2005; Abernethy, D., *The Dynamics of Global Dominance, European Overseas Empire 1415-1980*. Yale University Press, New Haven 2000; Bush, B., *Imperialism and post Colonialism: History: Concepts, Theories and Practice*. Pearson Education Limited, Edinburgh 2006.

⁵ *Widening the Gap: British Imperialism and the Great Divergence*. Retrieved from lse.ac.uk/collections/.../GEHNPDF/WideningtheGapDARWIN.pdf, accessed on 12/03/2009.

⁶ Cotton, A., Is British Imperialism Immoral ? *Review of Reviews* .November, 1904, p 510.

⁷ *The British Empire: Where the Sun Never Sets*. Retrieved from <http://www.britishempire.co.uk>, accessed on 12/03/2009.

⁸ Quoted by Johnson, R., *British Imperialism: Histories and Controversies*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2003, p 1.

⁹ Ibid.

adventure, and a patriotic and profitable holy mission. The Empire was built up over a long period of the time, and territories were required for quite different reasons. The British protected its vast territories by its navy which was one of the strongest and largest in the world.¹⁰

British prosperity depended on its commerce and the need to guard the trade routes which became inextricably woven with the question of national security.¹¹ British commercial and mercantile competition and contention with other European countries developed into passionate and fervent political rivalry.¹²

Those in charge and responsible for conducting the foreign policy of state were bound to work for ensuring the security of the land of their birth as well as for maintaining its Great power status and eminence. This conditioned their perceptions and consequently the manner and conduct of its relations with other powers. British diplomacy in the post-Napoleonic era was to maintain peace and security in Europe, to protect and safeguard its possessions overseas and to reinforce freedom of commerce everywhere.¹³

British foreign policy by and large was both aggressive and defensive; one opted for military means and the other applied economic and alliances as instruments. Furthermore, being an Island, British foreign policy was all the time influenced and determined by its geography.¹⁴

Interventionist policy was required time and again in the 19th century, to readjust the presumably altering balance of power and to promote British security. On the other hand, her colonial possessions were always in constant threat posing a multifaceted and complex problem of security together with the dilemma and quandary of 'unstable Frontiers.'¹⁵

Britain in the 19th century therefore manifested itself as a dichotomous picture of non-intervention against intervention, European interest against imperial interests and non-commitment against commitment. Britain's foreign policy was influenced by *innennpolitik* that is domestic, political, economic, financial considerations, constraint and restraint.¹⁶

¹⁰ British sea lanes, the arteries of trade, were filled with a vast merchant fleet. The exchange of goods on this global scale was supported by financial system based in the City of London. Adminstrating the Empire was a hierarchal bureaucracy.

¹¹ Mahajan, S., *British Foreign Policy, 1874-1914: The Role of India*. Routledge, London 2002, p 2.

¹² Amin, H., and Schilz, G.B., *A Geography of Afghanistan*. Center for Afghanistan Studies, Omaha 1976, p 11.

¹³ Gash, N., *Aristocracy and People Britain, 1865-1885*. Edward Arnold, London 1979, p 283.

¹⁴ Webster, C., *The Art and Practice of Diplomacy*. Bames & Noble, New York 1962, pp 14-5.

¹⁵ Johnson, R. A., Russians at the Gates of India? Planning the Defence of India, 1885-1900, In *The Journal of Military History*, no. 67(3) (July 2003), pp 697-743.

¹⁶ Mahajan. S., *British Foreign Policy, 1874-1914: The Role of India*. p x.

The Struggle for India: Defending the Frontiers of India

In the midst of its enormous and gigantic empire, India was one of its leading possessions. India because of its huge resources and the prestige associated with it was aptly termed the 'brightest jewel in the crown' of the British Empire. India became the symbol of alluring, prosperous, profitable, advantageous British Imperial greatness. Its protection from invasion became paramount. Preservation of British Dominion in the East was second only in importance to the security of the homeland itself.¹⁷ British governments irrespective of their party political affiliations acknowledged and considered the security of India as their top most priority and main concern.¹⁸ British Isles and India were the centres of their affluence, wealth, strength and power in the world.¹⁹ In Sneh Mahajan words 'Next in importance, and second only to the security of the United Kingdom itself, comes the question of the defence of India.'²⁰ The British could not afford to lose India which was a symbol of British fortune, prominence and authority.

India was not only important due to her own riches but it was the launching pad from where Britain established political and mercantile relationships with the countries in the Asia and Africa. The British Indian Army was to underpin interests in these regions from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards. To embark on a voyage and expedition to the East and partake of the riches and wealth of India remained a cherished and treasured figment of the imagination of European nations for centuries.²¹

When the British imperialists consolidated their hold in India, they sought to protect it not only from neighbouring powers, but from European rivals. The British government made Herculean efforts to make sure that the Great Powers of Europe kept their hands not just off their empire in India but all the states located in the vicinity of India. France had been a rival of Britain for power and influence for centuries. In 1798, when the Revolutionary government sent Napoleon to Egypt, he thought it was the first step in the direction to conquer India.²²

French activities and behaviour in the vicinity of India and on the route to India were observed with great concern both in London and Calcutta

¹⁷ Dicey, E., *England and Egypt*. Darf Publishers, London 1986, p 32.

¹⁸ British statesmen, Politicians, and officials, used phrases like, 'national interests', 'imperial interests', 'British interests' 'vital interests', etc in the light of British imperial foreign policy in the Mediterranean, in the Near East specially in the context of Anglo-Russian rivalry in Asia. The defence of frontiers of India and the security of the routes of India was of prime importance.

¹⁹ Robinson, R., and Gallagher, J. *Africa and the Victorians*. St. Martin's Press, New York 1961, p 13.

²⁰ Mahajan, *British Foreign Policy, 1874-1914: The Role of India*. p viii.

²¹ Popowaski, J., *The Rival Powers in Central Asia*. Gosha-e- Adab, Quetta 1977, p 69.

²² Hopkirk, P., *The Great Game: On Secret Service in High Asia*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001, p 22.

‘After Napoleon’s military venture to the Eastern Mediterranean,’ writes L. Carl Brown, ‘British statesmen never ceased worrying about the life–line to India.’²³ In 1801 a serious threat emerged out of a joint communiqué issued by the rulers of Russia and France which stated that the sufferings which ‘the people of India are faced with, had inspired the two leaders to unite their forces in order to liberate India from the tyrannical and barbarous yoke of the English.’²⁴ Lord Minto the Governor-General of India (1807 to 1813), worked strenuously and persistently to counter any invasion which might result from the Franco-Russian alliance during Napoleonic wars especially after the famous treaty of Tilsit in 1807.²⁵

The British observed with great concern and apprehension Franco-Russian rapprochement, French diplomatic ventures with Persia to get the support for an anti-British alliance, and also Franco-Persian overtures to the rulers of Sind were sufficient factors to cause alarm and anxiety. Lord Minto reacted by counter move by launching a diplomatic offensive to win over the rulers whose territories laid in the conceivable pathway of an invading army. Secret missions were sent to the capitals of Sind, Punjab, Afghanistan and Persia.²⁶ By the time the treaties had been secured in 1809, the grand design had lost its exigency; the British took the advantage by capturing the islands of Reunion and Mauritius from the French in 1809-10. These islands had long been bases for flourishing commerce and had figured prominently in Napoleon’s dream of restoring French power in India. The Governor-General also took the opportunity to dispossess the Dutch, Napoleon’s allies, of the islands of Moluccas and Java, hence further strengthening India’s outlying maritime routes.²⁷

The British saw no option but to strain every nerve and muscle, in order to defend India.²⁸ The first threat collapsed at Waterloo in 1815, and

²³ Brown, L. C., *Internal Politics and the Middle East: Old Rules Dangerous Game*. Princeton University Press, Princeton 1984, pp 25-26.

²⁴ Naik, J.A. *Soviet Policy Towards India From Stalin to Brezhnev*. Vikas Publications, Delhi 1970, p 3.

²⁵ After the death of Czar Paul I, Alexander I, his heir, revitalized the plan of the attack of India with French ruler Napoleon Bonaparte and decided to issue a proclamation to the rulers on the Indian borders to get their support. Some parts of the proclamation says: The army of the two most powerful nations in the world is to pass through their domain in order to reach India; that the sole aim of this expedition consists in driving out of Hindustan the British who have enslaved these beautiful lands...that the terrible state of oppression, misery, and slavery under which the peoples of these countries now groan has inspired the most lively sympathy of France and Russia;... that there is nothing to be feared on the part of the rulers and peoples of the countries through which the allied army has to pass.”(see Chohan, A.S., *The Gilgit Agency 1877-1935*. Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi 1984, p 28.

²⁶ Mahajan, S., *British Foreign Policy, 1874-1914: The Role of India*. p 24.

²⁷ Gillard, D., *The Struggle for Asia 1828- 1914: A Study in British and Russian Imperialism*. Methuen & Co Ltd, London 1977, p 15.

²⁸ Mahajan, S., *British Foreign Policy, 1874-1914: The Role of India*. p 7.

Napoleon took his dreams of conquering India into exile with him to St. Helena, where he died in 1821. Klemens Wenzel, Prince von Metternich of Austria stated: "Napoleon dreamt neither of the Porte nor of Asia, and if his hatred for England momentarily inspired him with the idea of attacking it in its Asian possessions, this project only existed as an eventuality depending on a combination of circumstances that were difficult to foresee."²⁹ The French menace gone into history with the demise of Napoleon but the British officials were still very much concerned and wanted to create a vast buffer zone to protect India from European rivals in future. Lawrence James elaborated this factor in these words:

*Ever since e Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, British regional policy was guided by the need to create as cheaply as possible a vast buffer zone stretching from the eastern Mediterranean to Afghanistan, which would serve as India's defensive glacis. Its perimeter encompassed the Turkish Provinces...Persia and Afghanistan.*³⁰

Both Russia and Great Britain had emerged as formidable centres of power after the defeat of Napoleon. In Britain, as elsewhere, news of Napoleon's demise was greeted with jubilation and euphoria. Alexander's earlier deception and duplicity in joining forces with Napoleon against Britain was advantageously forgotten, 'as relief overcame any other contemplation and consideration.'³¹

During the 19th century the Russian forward thrust in Central Asia was a last phase in its advancement and expansionism already in progress over several centuries. Since the time of Peter the Great (1682-1725), the Russian endeavour had been to gain access and contact via the Indo-Persian Corridor to reach the India Ocean, to set up and establish trade linkage with India and China, either by land or sea. The strongest inducement and motivation for Russia's territorial expansion over the centuries has been access to the sea. The inspiration of Russian expansion toward the warm waters ports to the south, either on the Dardanelles, in the Persian Gulf, or in the Indian Ocean³² has often been traced back to the Testament of Peter the Great, the Testament left a stirring and thrilling 'memorandum' to the world concerning Russia's predetermined progress and advance to Constantinople and beyond. While the testament helped to incite western Russophobia throughout the ages³³ it contained, nevertheless, an 'excellent synopsis'³⁴ of

²⁹ Amini, I., *Napoleon and Persia*. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/4299997.pdf>, accessed on 20/03/2010.

³⁰ James, L., *Raj: The Making and Unmaking of British India*. St. Martin's Press, New York 1998, p 368.

³¹ Hopkirk, *The Great Game: On Secret Service in High Asia*, p. 45.

³² Amin & Schilz., *A Geography of Afghanistan*, p 12.

³³ Canfield, R.L., *Turko-Persia in Historical Perspective*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2002, p 191.

Russia's past and potential targets. Richard A. Pierce, highlighted Russian intentions in these words:

*By the early 19th century the Russian statesmen and military men had also begun to feel concern the British commercial and political penetration in Central Asia. There call for decisive action to guarantee Russian trade and to raise Russian prestige among the Asian Peoples.... Thus impelled by provocations, temptations and apprehensions acceptable enough before a world opinion, still uninhabited by question of aggression or disregard for sovereign rights, Russia joined the rivalry for colonial acquisition which dominated nineteenth century international politics.*³⁵

In the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars, the governments of Great Britain and Russia had not marked one another out as a particular source of future danger,³⁶ but Russian adventurism by crossing into Caucasus and the British advances in India were to have momentous and long-term consequences in their relations.³⁷ Their preponderance and predominance in Eurasia made conflict and rivalry between them predictable and unavoidable. Initially Russia's advancement in Central Asia was not only a question to be concerned about but rather appreciated by some in England as

³⁴ Resis, A.T., Russophobia and the Testament of the Peter the Great, 1812-1980, In *Slavic Review*, no.44(4), 1985, pp 681- 93.

³⁵ Pierce, R.A., *Russian Central Asia 1867-1917*. University of California Press, Berkeley 1960, p.18.

According to Lawrence James the Russian move was played:

On a chess-board that extended from the Balkans and the eastern Mediterranean to the Chinese borderlands. It encompassed one, over-extended Muslim empire, the Turkish, and the decrepit one, the Persian. Beyond and to the east lay the decayed Khanates of Khiva, Kokand and Bukhara, Afghanistan and a scattering of tribal entities whose semi- nomadic inhabitants never recognised frontiers and were a law unto themselves. Seen from the perspective of a ministerial desk in St. Petersburg, this region represented a vast vacuum to be filled by Russia which had, during the 18th century, slowly built up a momentum of conquest whose direction lay southwards and eastwards. The pace of war and annexation was dictated by a small body of bored frontier commanders in search of glory and promotion, ultranationalist preaching doctrines of imperial destiny, Orthodox zealots hoping to reverse centuries of Muslim encroachments, and businessmen seeking fresh markets.(see James, *Raj: The Making and Unmaking of British India*, p 367).

³⁶ By the end of the 18th century, the British secured a position that it had open to them the same kind of choice as was offered to the Russians by the line of the Caucasus, either to hold it, or to use it as a base, to expand further. Like the Russians the British opted for the latter one.

³⁷ The idea that Russia could become a major threat to the British Empire in Asia and subsequently India came to be realised when the enormous wings of the Russian eagle seemed to overshadow the British ascendancy in the region. Pitt in the Oczakov incident of 1791 had first sounded the alarm, Jenkinson, the future Lord of Liverpool in his speech to the house of Commons raised the issue of Russia, its restless politics and ambitions which he thought needed attention.(see Gash, *Aristocracy and people Britain, 1865-1885*, p 284).

a white man's burden to explore and civilise the barbarian.³⁸ With India firmly and resolutely established as the jewel in the British crown – and the wellspring and fountain of the empire's prosperity and affluence – British statesmen, diplomats and politician's anxieties slowly focused on the continued and unrelenting expansion of Czarist Russia.³⁹

According to Norman Gash from the British point of view, the Russian menace extended beyond European frontiers to the overland route to India through the Red Sea. India's weakest points were Persia and Afghanistan which were exposed to Russian penetration.⁴⁰ In the Balkans, and across the Straits which formed the only channel from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, the obstacle and barrier was the Ottoman Empire with its declining dynasty, its paralytic administration, and its restless tributary states. After the Congress of Vienna, the significance of Turkey began to be more and more appreciated by European diplomats. Its survival became even for many liberals as European necessity and obligation. To strengthen the Middle East and keep in check Russia therefore became the basic principle of British foreign policy.⁴¹ Charles Marvin an anti-Russian believed that 'the chain of conflict zones, consisting of the Ottoman Empire, Russia and Central Asia.'⁴² In this political wrangling the Central Asian States were

³⁸ Regarding this point Sir Stafford Northcote stated: "Her Majesty's Government see no reason for any uneasiness or for any jealousy. The conquests which Russia has made, and apparently is still making, in Central Asia, appear to them to be the natural result of the circumstances in which she finds herself placed, and to afford no ground whatever for representations indicative of suspicion or alarm on the part of this country." (Address in Answer to Her Majesty's most Gracious Speech. <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1878/dec/05/address-in-answer-to-her-majestys-most>, (accessed April 10, 2010). He was not alone in this opinion; Sir Herbert Benjamin Edwardes wrote, 'Can anyone say that to substitute Russian rule for the anarchy of Khiva, the dark tyranny of Bokhara and the nomad barbarism of Khokand would be anything but a gain to mankind ?' (Herbert Edwards quoted by Roberts, P.E. *British rule in India: India Under the British Crown 1856-47*, Vol.2. Reprint Publication, Dehradun 2006, p 409.

³⁹ The Russian threat and menace began to be discussed more seriously during the late 1820s and the debate received a stimulus from the publication in 1828 and 1829 of two books by Colonel G. de Lacy Evans, the purport and claim of second book was that their existed a danger of a direct Russian invasion of India through Turkestan. The two books titled *The Designs of Russia* (London: 1828) and *On the Practicability of a Russian Invasion of British India* (London: 1829). Evan concerns were rejected by some British Indian officers, for them the physical difficulties alone meant that no formidable Russian force could penetrate to India, and the opposition which they would face and encounter from the people in its path. Instead the Russian control over Persia and her presence near the Indian frontier would unsettle the minds in India and on the North West frontier.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp 284-5.

⁴² Pethybridge, R.W., British Imperialists in the Russian Empire, In *Russian Review*, no. (30)(04), 1971, pp 346-355.

mere pawns on the chessboard of colonial rivalry between the two European imperialist Powers.⁴³

Russia's expansionist policies in Central Asia by the early 1830s were seen by some British as a new and dangerous threat to their Indian possessions. In this regard many books were available to the public, one and all discussing, temperately or extravagantly but always seriously, the most likely direction of the Russian advance. One British official warned about the threats which the British could face from the Russians in a report entitled "An enquiry into the means of attack on British India by Russia and of defence to be posed to it."

*Russia possesses sufficient resources for effectively carrying on her operations in that quarter, without diminishing the strength of her European armies, or improving her means of resistance to any combination of allies, which it may be in the power of Great Britain to array against her upon her western frontier....Russian and Persian army once established on the Indus...would possess such tremendous means of arousing all the disaffected Powers of India, uniting them in an attack upon British Power, that the event of the struggle might become uncertain, even with the most numerous levies got together to meet the general assailants. It will therefore be of the utmost importance to the Indian Government to meet the enemy if possible on the Indus, by securing the warlike Afghans as allies...*⁴⁴

⁴³ Kaushik, D., *Central Asia in Modern Times: A History From the Early 19th Century*. Progress Publishers, Moscow 1970, p 9.

⁴⁴ MM/IN/1/4, Broadlands Achieves, University of Southampton, UK. David Fromkin suggested that Britain by the middle of the nineteenth century had some apprehensions for opposing the continuing Russian expansion in Asia:

- (1) it would upset the balance of power by making Russia much stronger than the other European powers;
- (2) it would culminate in a Russian invasion of British India;
- (3) it would encourage India to revolt against Britain;
- (4) it would cause the Muslim regimes of Asia to collapse, which in turn would lead to the outbreak of a general war between the European powers in order to determine which of them would get what share of the valuable spoils;
- (5) it would strengthen a country and a regime that were the chief enemies of popular political freedom in the world;
- (6) it threatened to disrupt the profitable British trade with Asia;
- (7) it would strengthen the sort of protectionist, closed economic society which free-trading Britain morally disapproved of; and
- (8) it would threaten the line of naval communications upon which Britain's commercial and political position in the world depended. (See David, F., *The Great Game in Asia*, In *Foreign Affairs*, no.58(4), 1980, pp 936-951.

By the end of 1837 Russophobia was a major element in a segment of British public opinion.⁴⁵ It was in a real sense Lord Palmerston, the then foreign Secretary and later on the Prime Minister, of Great Britain began his campaign against the Russian threat by vigorously contesting Russian influence and sway throughout western and Central Asia and in the capitals of Europe.⁴⁶ Captain Arthur Conolly (1807-1842), of the Bengal Cavalry, credited with being the first to describe the nineteenth-century jousting between Imperial Russia and Great Britain in Central Asia as “the Great Game,” even though it was Rudyard Kipling who popularised this “jolly-sounding reference to intrigue and derring-do in his Victorian romances of empire”⁴⁷ in his famous novel *Kim*.⁴⁸ P.J. Brobst termed it ‘A grand chessboard and a contest for mastery in Asia.’⁴⁹ Count Nesselrode, Russian Foreign Minister, had fashioned his own term for this conflict, ‘Tournament of Shadow’, but it was the ‘Great Game’ that caught the popular imagination.⁵⁰

The year of 1838 was quite significant for both Russia and Great Britain as the Great Game for Central Asia was about ‘to burst into open warfare, with India the prize and Afghanistan the playing field.’⁵¹ The British made the justification to invade Afghanistan to counter Russian moves in that country in order to maintain the balance of power in its favour. After two years of occupation and massive waste of money and blood the British left the country in failing to achieve its objectives in its first adventurism to dominate the mountains of Hindu Kush. The coming decades were marked by the influence, deception, valor, affectation, gallantry, viciousness and occasionally pure wildness that now go under the name of Great Game.⁵²

⁴⁵ Gleason, J.H., *The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain*. Mass, Cambridge 1950, p 204.

⁴⁶ Fromkin, *The Great Game in Asia*,

⁴⁷ Waller, J.H., *Beyond The Khyber Pass: The Road to British Disaster in the First Afghan War*. University of Texas Press, Austin 1990, p xvii. Arthur Conolly was executed along a fellow British officer Charles Stoddart by the Emir of Bukhara in 1842.

⁴⁸ This splendidly, delicately observed novel is perhaps one of the best-known description of the Great Game published in 1901. The story unfolds against the backdrop of the political rivalry between Czarist Russia and Great Britain in Central Asia. The novel is also notable for its detailed portrait of Indian people, culture, and its varied religions. The book presents a vivid picture of India, its teeming populations, religions, superstitions, and the life. There are references to troubles on the frontiers etc.

⁴⁹ Brobst, P.J., *The Future of the Great Game: Sir Olaf Caroe, India's Independence, and the Defense of Asia*. The University of Akron Press, Ohio 2005, p xiii.

⁵⁰ Middleton, R., *Extract from Chapter The Great Game – myth or reality?*. Retrieved from <http://pamirs.org/Extract%20Odyssey%20Great%20Game.pdf>, accessed on 12/7/2011.

⁵¹ Tanner, S., *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2003, p 136.

⁵² Ibid.

Conclusion

To protect and safeguard the frontiers of India and its routes was an unquestioned maxim of British foreign policy. The British policy makers concentrated and focused on the containment of any threat to their interest in the region. The British developed a policy which called for a greater consolidation of British power in India and expansion of British political influence and sway in neighboring countries through an ostentatious and well-planned system of buffer zones. The British Empire made enormous efforts to make it sure that the western imperialist powers not only kept their hands off their empire in India but also the neighbouring countries of India. As a result, the whole area from the wild Central Asian plain down to the Arabian Sea in the south and the Persian Gulf in the southwest had been exposed to the most delicate and difficult diplomatic game, known as the 'Great Game' among the imperialist powers of the day (France, Great Britain & Russia). The British were apprehensive that any approach to her frontiers could lead to an outbreak of general revolt against their rule in India which they wanted to avoid at any cost. On the other hand, the British were, also very much keen to extend their influence, and if conceivable, control over the neighboring countries.

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THE CHANGING GEO-POLITICAL IMPORTANCE AND HISTORICAL SETTING OF ASTOR VALLEY NORTHERN PAKISTAN

*Fazlur-Rahman**
& *Iffat Tabassum***

Introduction

The study of political boundaries and frontier, a major theme of Political Geography, has a long history in Geographical research¹. Kristof has provided a detailed review of historical literature pertaining to different aspect of boundaries in three languages². Boundaries work as barrier as well as contact zone to the population living on both sides and they exist at every level separating continents, countries provinces and so on. In many cases boundaries have been demarcated after a detailed survey and comprehensive mapping³ (cf. Fletcher1999). However, with the passage of time the situation of international boundaries has totally changed in Europe with the formation of economic blocks and zones. Nevertheless, Leimgruber⁴ concluded that "[...], but boundaries continue to be one of the characteristics of the state. It can be contended that human coexistence owes a lot to the existence of boundaries, because they allow us to see and recognize the advantages of differences and judge for ourselves on which side of a border life is better. We cannot live in an unorganized world, hence the "prison walls" must continue to exist. However, holes in them are essential for humanity."

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¹ Minghi J. V., Boundary studies in Political Geography. In *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 53, 1963, pp 407-428.

² Kristof L K. D., The Nature of Frontiers and Boundaries. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 49, 1959, [Part 1] pp 269-282.

³ Fletcher, D., The Ordnance Survey's Nineteenth Century Boundary Survey: Context, Characteristics and Impact. In *Imago Mundi*, Vol. 51, 1999, pp. 131-146.

⁴ Leimgruber, W., Boundaries and Transborder Relations, or the Hole in the Prison Wall: On the Necessity of Superfluous Limits and Boundaries. In *GeoJournal*, Vol. 64, 2005, pp. 239-248.

The general scenario in south Asia is quite different. Here boundaries have been drawn mostly by imperial powers mainly for geostrategic reasons and in most of the cases the inhabitants have suffered one way or another. The boundaries problems that have originated in 1947⁵ are still persisting in many locations particularly in the geographically inaccessible areas. In areas where the boundary is blurred and people are using resources in the close proximity are suffering a lot.⁶ With respect to the mountainous region of the Indian subcontinent, Kreutzmann⁷ provided a comprehensive overview on the genesis of colonial and post colonial boundaries, effect of ethno-linguistic characteristics of the region, changing political status of the localities in the so called contested frontier.

This study is primarily focused on the geo-political changes in Astor Valley. It is located in the western Himalaya and contiguous to the Jammu and Kashmir region. In the past for about a century it remained one of the main thoroughfares between Kashmir and the Northern Areas of Pakistan, popularly known as the Gilgit-Baltistan region. Moreover, before 1895 the main route from India to Chitral was also passing through this valley. Thus for more than a century this valley remained one of the major thoroughfare connecting this region with Kashmir and thus providing the basic necessities to the whole northern mountainous belt. The geographical location of Astor Valley, changes in the political setup at regional level in the Indian subcontinent and the British interest in this mountainous region totally changed the socio-economic structure of the inhabitants of this valley. However, political changes in the 1940s, the Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India also affected the area under study. Since 1948 the political status of this valley changed and it became a typical cul-de-sac. This situation totally transformed the socio-economic structure of the inhabitants and majority of them suffered considerably. Nevertheless, the changing position of the cease fire line and deployment of military along the line of control has also stimulated the construction and maintenance of major infrastructure projects and provision of basic facilities and public amenities in the study area. This study is focused only on the Astor Valley that is the watershed of the Astor River. In this paper an attempt is made to highlight the geo-political importance of the study area with particular reference to the impacts of regional and supra-regional political events.

⁵ Ahmad N. The Indo-Pakistan Boundary Disputes Tribunal, 1949-1950. *Geographical Review*, Vol. 43, 1953, pp. 329-337.

⁶ Gupta C and Sharma M., Blurred Borders: Coastal Conflicts Between India and Pakistan. In *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol 39, 2004, pp. 3005-3015.

⁷ Kreutzmann H. Kashmir and the Northern Areas of Pakistan: Boundary-Making Along Contested Frontiers. In *Erdkunde*, Vol. 62, 2008, pp. 201-219.

Geographical Characteristics of Astor Valley

Astor a valley, presently part of the Astor district, is located in the north western Himalayas. It has been one of the politically and strategically important places since antiquity. This valley is surrounded by high mountains on all sides and the entry and exit in the past was only possible through passes ranging in height from above 13,000 feet to over 17,000 feet from mean sea level. Important passes of the valley are Mazeno Gali (17540 ft), Toshe Gali (16820 ft), Shonter Gali (14950), Rati Gali (14090 ft) Kamri Pass (13368 ft), Burzil Pass (14000 ft), Chachor Pass (13997 ft), Alampi La (16503 ft), Banak La (16285 ft) and Ditchal Gali (15100 ft). They are connecting Astor Valley with the surrounding areas of Diamir, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Baltistan. Compared to other passes, the southern passes such as Kamri and Burzil were and still are easy to cross and more important not only for the study area, but also for the whole northern mountainous region of Pakistan. The southern margins of Astor valley separate the Indus watershed from the Jehlum and Astor River is one of the major left bank tributary of the Indus River.

Astor valley is located towards the south east of Gilgit at a distance of about 150 km. It remained part of the Gilgit Wazarat during the Dogra rule and was part of Gilgit district till 1973. In 1973 Diamir district was created and Astor became a subdivision of that district. With the passage of time the location of this valley necessitated administrative changes and Astor was upgraded to an additional district till 2004. However, in 2004 it has been upgraded to a regular district of Northern Areas of Pakistan and the historical administrative headquarter has been shifted from Astor centre (Choungrah/Eidgah) to Gorikot in the southern part of the main valley. The geographical area of Astor district is 6554 km² and according to the census of 1998 the total population of Astor was 71,666 persons.⁸ This district is bounded on the north by Gilgit district on the northeast by Baltistan, to the south by the Gurez valley of Indian held Kashmir, to the southeast by Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and to the west by Chilas subdivision of Diamir district (Fig 1).

In addition to the political and strategic significance, one of the most important trade route was also passing through this valley in north south direction, connecting on the one hand China and other Central Asian States with Indian sub-continent on the other hand it has been the main link between Afghanistan in the far west and Leh and Tibet in the east. This valley was also known as 'key of the Hindukush' and has been the gateway on the famous trade route connecting China with the West, Kashmir and South-Asian Sub-continent.⁹ Throughout the historical period the name of Astor valley had been changing and each writer, traveller, explorer and historian had used different

⁸ Government of Pakistan., *District Census Report of Diamir District (1998)*; *Northern Areas of Pakistan*. Population census organization Islamabad 2001, p 47.

⁹ Khan, A.A., *Land Use Survey of Astor River Watershed (Diamir District)*. Aerial Forest Inventory Project. Peshawar. 1979, p 6. North West Frontier Forest Record Inventory Series 13.

names for it. According to Khan, "Astor has been mentioned by the Greek traveller Herodotus (484-425 BC). It was also traversed by two Chinese travellers (Pilgrims), Fa-Hsien from the north in 400 A.D. and Hsuan-Tsang from south in 629 A.D. The famous Muslim tourist (Sig!) and historian Al-Biruni (996-1037 A.D.) visited the area and called it 'Asvira'. The ancient name of the track was 'Abhisaras' or highland in Sanskrit". Later on this name changed to 'Hasora' which has been mentioned in most of the documents of the revenue department. The Kashmiri officials mostly used this name in compiling official records and correspondences. Moreover, in this regard Wazir Mohammad Ashraf Khan observed that the name (Hasora) had evolved from 'Hisar' means fort in Persian. It was because of the location of the valley, which is surrounded by high mountains, or due to the fortified settlements or 'kotes' that were common here at the time of Kashmir influence. About the recent name 'Astor' he further observes that, "it [Astor] is a combination of two Pashto words 'AS and 'TOR' means black horses, signifying, perhaps, the place where horse abound due to its grassy meadows."¹⁰

Historical Settings

Astor valley has no separate history of its own. It remained most of the time under the influence of its strong neighbours, such as Gilgit, Baltistan and Kashmir. Therefore, the history of this valley is closely associated with them. Moreover, history of these remote valleys such as Astor was lost in the myth of antiquity because of the illiteracy of the inhabitants and unavailability of written records.

The surrounding areas of this valley had been inhabited by the human being right from the prehistoric times. Based on the rock carvings studied in Chilas, Gilgit, Baltistan etc., it is generally believed by archaeologists and anthropologists that in the past these areas were not isolated in the broad regional context. There was all the time movement of people as a result of political changes in the north or south. Detail analysis of rock carvings, found along the Indus River revealed that the first inhabitants living there at that time were hunters, gatherers and collectors. They were living in caves and under large boulders. Moreover, the results of the latest research based on C14 dating revealed that animal husbandry in this region had been started around fourth century A.D.¹¹ According to the available information, as far as Astor valley is concerned, until now, no rock carving has been reported from here. The existence of the prehistoric Man in the area seems to be logical because on the one hand it has been mentioned by the great historians and pilgrims in the past and on the other hand all the surrounding areas of the valley having enough

¹⁰ Khan, W. M.A., *The Hinter Land of Asia*. 1962. p 47. Feroz Sons Rawalpindi.

¹¹ Jacobsen, J.P., Finding Relating to Settlement History of Yasin Valley in the Northeastern Hindu Kush, Northern Pakistan. In: Stellerrecht, I. (Ed.) *Cultural Area Karakoram Occasional Paper No.2*. Tübingen 1995, pp 93-99.

proof of its existence. It is therefore, logical and justified to assume that this area was first settled during that said period.

The historical events of the past have not been recorded properly therefore, there is a gap in the historical evolution of the study area. The following description is based on the colonial records and other secondary sources compiled in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Based on the available written records historical evolution of the area under study can be divided into the following periods.

1. Astor under Gilgit rule from 1080 to 1602 A.D.
2. Astor under Baltistan/ Skardu rule from 1603 to 1819 A.D.
3. Sikhs rule from 1819 to 1846 A.D.
4. Dogra rule from 1847 A.D. to November 3rd 1947
5. Astor after independence 4th November 1947 till to date.

Astor Under Gilgit Rule (1080 to 1602 A.D.)

It has been mentioned in various sources that the study area remained under the control of the Gilgit rulers for more than 500 years. However, the available historical records lack detailed chronological structure. According to Mulvi Hashmatullah Khan Astor came under the rule of Gilgit during the reign of Malik. He was ruling over Gilgit and the surrounding areas from 1160 A.D. to 1205 A.D. and extended his rule to Astor.¹² Later on, it remained part of the Tarkhane kingdom until the reign of Mirza Khan 1565 to 1600 AD. Contrary to this other writers are of the view that the territory of Astor was part of Kashmir before its occupation by the Gilgit rulers.¹³ Moreover, the same author quoted above placed Astor in the territory ruled by Sheri Bedut (ca. 1080-1120).¹⁴ Nevertheless, from the geographical setting of this valley and the difficulties of access from Gilgit side it is safe to assume that the hold of Gilgit rulers over Astor might be of nominal type. But being on the main route to Baltistan and Tibet and Kashmir/India its importance was realised by the neighbouring principalities. It was usually functioning as a buffer zone between the ruling dynasties of Gilgit and Baltistan and in the meantime it also enjoyed a nominal independence mainly because of the difficulties of access from both sides. From Gilgit side crossing of the Indus River was a major problem and from Baltistan side the passes were quite higher and difficult to cross in most part of the year. For the inhabitants of Chilas it remained an important area for raids

¹² Khan, M.H., *Tarikh-e-Jammu Lucknow* 1937. (Urdu) Reprinted by Veri Nag Publishers Mirpur Azad Kashmir 1991, p 672.

¹³ Khan, A.B., Astor Ghulami sa Azadi Tak. In: Khan Sartaj (Ed.) *Aaina-i-Daimir* (Urdu) (Harpan Dass Chilas Northern Areas of Pakistan 1992) p 163-174. However, the views of this author are contradicting with the arguments of Hashmatullah Khan and Ahmad Hassan Dani. Mulvi Hashmatullah Khan had been Wazir-e-wazarat in Gilgit and he is also the author of an Urdu book "Tarikh-e-Jammu (1939) and Ahmad Hassan Dani is also the author of a book titled "History of the Northern Areas of Pakistan (1989). Islamabad.

¹⁴ Khan, M.H., *Tarikh-e-Jammu*. Lucknow 1937. (Urdu) opt cit p 679.

for plunder (see below). Nevertheless, this valley enjoyed internal security and accommodated the inhabitants of the war-torn Yaghistan. Most of the people fled to this valley in search of refuge. The surrounding areas were notorious for intertribal wars and blood feuds. This is manifested through the growth and development of human settlements in the valley.

Astor Under Skardu Rule (1603 to 1819 A.D.)

Astor was then occupied by the Makpun dynasty of Skardu during the reign of Ahmad Khan (1603-1636). The main cause for the western expansion of his empire was the repeated raids for plunder by the Astor people on their territory from the north. It remained under the rule of this dynasty for about 300 years.¹⁵ Some of the villages are still held as revenue free estate (Jagirs) of the Raja of Skardu.¹⁶ Up to 1722 Astor was directly ruled from Skardu. For more details the following paragraph has been reproduced from the Gazetteer of Kashmir and Jammu 1909.

“The history of Astor, as the Dogra called it Hasora, is intimately connected with that of Skardu. More than 300 years ago Ghazi Makpun, a Persian adventurer, is said to have married, a princess of Skardu reigning family. The four sons born of this union became Ras¹⁷ of Skardu, Astor, Rundo, and Kharmang respectively and from them are the descended of the families of the present chiefs of those places. The independence of Astor ceased at the Dogra conquest. The present titular Raja of Astor is the lineal descendent of Ghazi Makpun.”¹⁸

From the time of Shah Sultan the first Makpun Raja of Astor it became an independent principality with its own Raja (Fig 2.). During this period relations with Skardu were amicable.¹⁹ Nevertheless, according to Moorcroft and Trebeck “the Raja was nominally subject to Ahmad Shah, and assisted him, not long before, to repel a predatory attack of the Afghans.”²⁰

This long rule of the Baltis had a profound affect on the culture and traditions of Astoris. There are many villages that are predominantly occupied by Baltis. Few of these villages existed before 1847. The expansion of Sikhs towards the west from Kashmir and subsequently occupation of Skardu by them ceased the independence of Astor.²¹

¹⁵ Khan, M.H., *Tarikh-e-Jammu op cit* p17;

¹⁶ Singh, T., *Assessment Report of Gilgit Tahsil*. Lahore 1917, p 9, 10; *Archives of the Land Revenue Astor Tahsil* Astor ca. 1917.

¹⁷ The Local rulers of Skardu were known as Ras and later on became Raja.

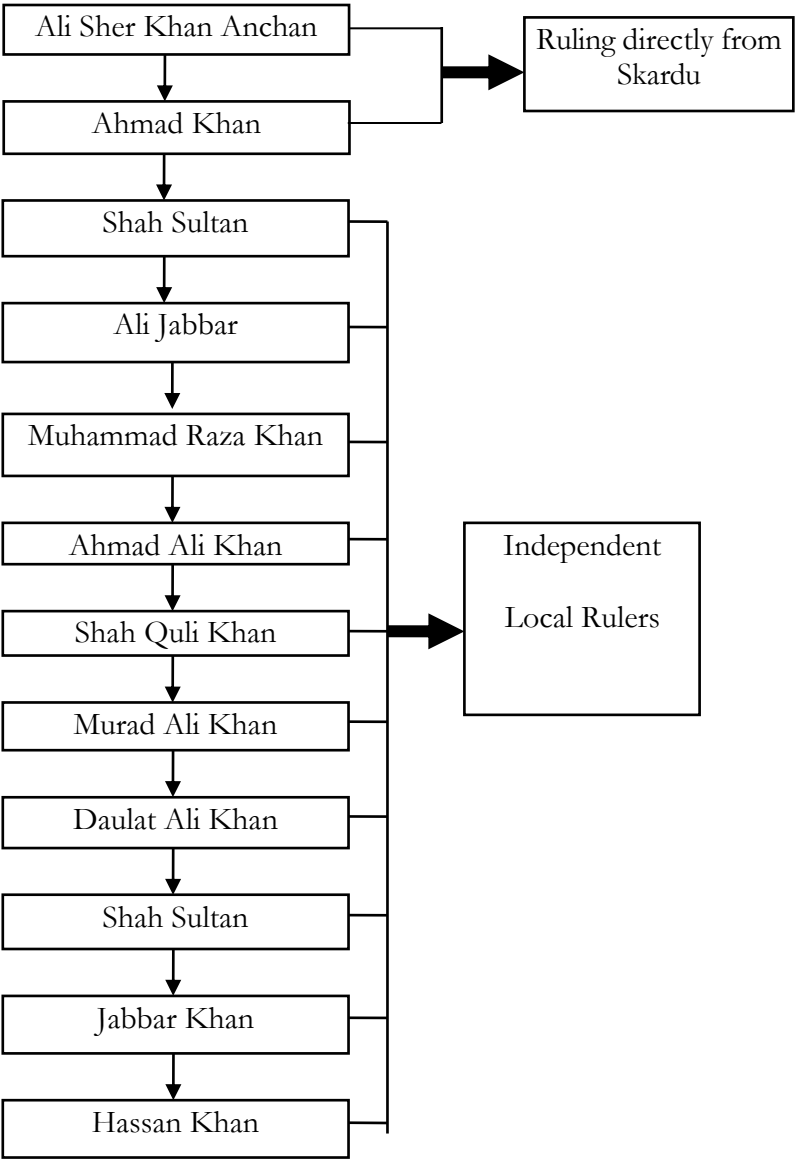
¹⁸ Government of India., 1909 *opt cit* p.102

¹⁹ Jettmar, K., Northern Areas of Pakistan: An Ethnographic Sketch. In: Dani A.H. (Ed.): *History of Northern Areas of Pakistan*. Islamabad Historical Studies (Pakistan) Series 5 1989, pp 59-88;

²⁰ Moorcroft, W. & G., Trebeck., *Travels in the Himalayan Province of Hindustan and the Punjab from 1819 to 1825*. London. 1841 Vol. 2. Reprint Karachi 1979, p 264.

²¹ Government of India., 1909 *opt cit* p.102

Fig 2: Genealogy of the Raja of Astor



Sources: Hashmatullah Khan 1937; Drew 1875; Gazetteer of Jammu & Kashmir 1909.

Astor Under Sikh Rule 1819 to 1846

During this period up to 1819 it was independently ruled by the local Rajas. When the Sikhs occupied Kashmir, Astor became tributary to them without sending any force there.²² In the meantime Wazir Lakpat, in compliance with the orders of Gulab Singh, conquered Skardu and attacked on Astor and took away the Raja of the latter as a prisoner. But this action of Gulab Singh was disliked by the Lahore authorities and directed him not to interfere with Astor and thus the Raja was sent back and reinstated. The Sikhs practically occupied Astor territory in the year 1842. This was the time when Shah Sikander, a ruler of the Tarkhani dynasty of Gilgit approached the Sikhs darbar for military help to take his brothers' revenge, who was killed by Gaur Aman.²³ Thus while on their way to Gilgit the Sikhs army occupied Astor and established their strongholds at strategic places. With this attempt of Sikhs the rule of Makpun family ended and the then Raja of Astor became a titular one.

Astor Under Dogra Rule (1847 to 1947)

In the aftermath of the treaty of Amritsar; March 16, 1846;²⁴ British sold Kashmir to the Rajput Raja of Jammu and Kashmir; Gulab Singh for 75,000 Rupees. As a result the study area came under the rule of Dogras and who stepped into the shoes of Sikhs. It was practically occupied by the former in the year 1852 while on their mission to Chilas. Since then Astor valley remained in their control for a century, as a Tahsil of the Gilgit Wazarat, up to the independence of the Northern Areas of Pakistan. In the last decade of the 19th century due to British interest in this region the strategic importance of Astor valley increased many folds. Although during this period, most of the time the whole region remained under a dual controls or 'diarchy'.²⁵

With the Dogra occupation and extension of their domain to the right-bank of the Indus the sufferings of the local inhabitants considerably increased. The land revenue, in the form of cash and kind, was imposed without proper assessment. The carriage of food and military equipments over the difficult mountain passes from Jammu and Kashmir on the way to Gilgit was one of the major problems. Almost all the work was done through forced labour and the inhabitants were treated as a beast of burden and during the summer season they were usually on Gilgit-Bandipur road and carrying the load on their back. Moreover, the villagers were also entrusted to feed the touring officials. For

²² Drew, F., *The Jammu and Kashmir Territories: A Geographical Account*. London 1875 Reprint Graz 1976, p 403.

²³ Ibid, p 437,438. However, Drew spelled the name as Gaur Rahman, which is not correct. (See Dani History Northern areas of Pakistan 1991 and Military Report and Gazetteer of the Gilgit Agency 1928).

²⁴ Drew *opt cit* p 546-547.

²⁵ Lamb, A., *Kashmir a disputed legacy 1846-1990*. Oxford University Press Karachi 1991, p 57.

this purpose localities along the whole length of the road from Burzil/Karmi pass to Bunji were divided among the villages as a collective responsibility.

In the meantime the efforts to get supremacy in this region by the then super powers, Great Britain and Russia which culminated to the famous 'Great Game' in the nineteenth century increased the importance of the whole area known to the foreigners at that time as 'Dardistan' in general and the study area in particular. This interest of the British resulted in the establishment of the Gilgit Agency as an outpost to command, control and safeguard the western passes of the Hindu Kush, which were of fundamental importance for them to check and stop the Russian expansion towards India. Consequently this region also attracted the attention of travellers and other missions and thus opened the area to the foreigners. It resulted in the exploration and collection of basic information about the people their history and way of life for the first time in their history. Meanwhile the British also conducted detailed topographical and cadastral mapping of the region including the study area for defensive purposes and revenue collection.

To facilitate the travellers, government officials/explorers and oversee the political developments along the western passes of the Hindu Kush, Gilgit Agency was established in the year 1877.²⁶ Major Biddulph was appointed as a political agent. The headquarter of this agency was placed at Gilgit and the major task given to the political agent was to develop bilateral relations with the surrounding principalities such as Hunza, Nagar, Punial, Ghizer and Chitral. The exploration and other political development were in progress and the political agent had made tremendous development in a relatively short period of time. However, this agency was withdrawn within three years.²⁷ Though most of the travellers and other officials travelled via Astor valley, nevertheless, the establishment as well as the withdrawal of the agency has very little impact on the study area. It is because of the fact that Astor was under the rule of Dogras and they were facilitating the British at that time. The latter were dependent on the facilities of the former and the role of the agency and its officials were not properly and formally defined. Moreover, the Dogras were not happy with the British advancement across the Indus River. This has already reflected in the treacherous murder of the British explorer George Hayward at Yasin in 1871.²⁸

However, the British government has changed her decision in less than a decade and Gilgit Agency was re-established in the year 1889 following the recommendation of Colonel Alegernon Durand and he himself was appointed as a political agent at Gilgit.²⁹ This in the long run proved a landmark in the

²⁶ bid p 29.

²⁷ For more detail on the establishment of Gilgit Agency see Chohan 1980.

²⁸ Keay, J., *The Gilgt Game: The Explorers of the Western Himalayas 1865-1895*. John Murray London 1979, p 56-67.

²⁹ General Staff India., *Military Report and Gazetteer of the Gilgit Agency and the Independent Territories of Tangir and Darel*. Government of India Press Simla 1928, p 49.

social changes and economic development of Astor valley. Meanwhile large numbers of forces regular and irregular were kept in the agency for the defence of the area. To improve communication between Gilgit and Kashmir, the Gilgit Srinagar road was improved in this period and was made feasible for camel throughout its length from Srinagar, Bandipur via, Burzil pass (14000 f) and Astor to Gilgit at the cost of 15 lacks Rupees.³⁰ (Table 1 and Fig 1)

Total length of this road from Srinagar to Gilgit was 233 miles. This distance was covered by the Maharajah forces and travellers in more or less 22 marches, on the average 10.16 miles per march. Out of 22 marches or stages only nine or ten were falling within the territorial limits of Astor valley.³¹ From Gurez onward up to Gorikote, the present headquarter of the district, this road was forked into two, one was via Kamri pass and the other was via Burzil pass. The former was shorter than the latter but the latter was easy to cross even in winter season and also opens one month earlier and closes one month later than the former. However, the Burzil pass was exclusively used for the transport of the commodities for the military.³²

³⁰ Government of India., *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Kashmir and Jammu*. Calcutta, 1909, p 8.

³¹ Drew, F., *Jammu and Kashmir Territories: A Geographical Account*. opt cit p 528,529.

³² Kreutzmann, H., The Chitral Triangle: Rise and Decline of Trans-Montane Central Asian Trade, 1895-1935. In *Asien Afrika Lateinamerika* vol. 26, 1998, pp 289-327.

Table 1: Route 9 From Srinagar To Gilgit (A) Alternate Route From Srinagar To Gilgit (B)³³

1 (A)		2	3	4	1 (B)		2	3	4
Srinagar		0	5235	---	Srinagar		0	5235	---
Sambal		1	5200	17	Sambal		1	5200	17
Bandipur		2	5200	18	Bandipur		2	5200	18
Tragbal		3	9160	9	Tragbal		3	9160	9
Zotkusu		4	---	9	Zotkusu		4	---	9
Kunzalwan		5	---	6	Kunzalwan		5	---	6
Gurez		6	7800	11	Gurez		6	7800	11
Gorikote (Gurez)		7	9370	11	Bangla		7	8725	11
Mohudas		8	---	12	Mapun		8	10130	9
Camp	S t u d y	9	---	11	Burzil	S t u d y	9	10740	9
Pukarkot		10	9000	11	Camp		10	---	12
Chagam		11	8560	12	Das		11	10500	9
Gorikote (Astor)		12	8058	13	Gudhai		12	---	12
Astor or Hasora		13	7853	7	Naugam		13	---	8
Harcho	A r e a	14	6700	11	Astor	A r e a	14	7853	12
Mushkin		15	---	8	Harcho		15	6700	11
Duiyan		16	8720	8	Mushkin		16	---	8
Ramghat		17	---	12	Duiyan		17	8720	8
Bawanji		18	4645	12	Ramghat		18	---	12
Jagrot		19	6260	12	Bawanji		19	4645	12
Camp		20	---	7	Jagrot		20	6260	12
Minawar		21	---	8	Camp		21	---	7
Gilgit		22	4800	11	Minawar		22	---	8
Total		22	---	233	Gilgit		23	4800	11
					Total		23	---	238

1 Stage, 2 Number, 3 Height above sea level (ft.) 4 Distance from the last stage (miles)

³³ Names of the localities listed in the table are spelled exactly as they were written in the original source. However, both in the text and on the map name/spelling of the localities is based on Singh, T., *Assessment Report of Gilgit Tahsil opt cit 1917*.

Many developmental projects were under taken during this period. To increase the local food/fodder production area under plough were increased through the extension of existing irrigation channels and construction of new irrigation schemes. Consequently, throughout the study area considerable acreage of cultivable waste were ameliorated. At Bunji to cross the Indus the exiting ferry service was improved and then a permanent bridge was constructed over the river in the year 1912. On the Srinagar Gilgit road, inns (sarais) and rest houses were constructed at suitable places. In normal case the rest houses were built at a distance of every 33 kilometres. It is one-day march on horseback. The villages located near these rest houses were assigned the duty to supply the provisions to the travellers and officials on tour. This, along with other duties like the transportation of food and other necessary belongings for the army and other officials and allotment of land free of revenue (*Jagirs*) to the dethroned rulers, increased the forced labour (Kar-e-begar) many fold. In the meantime some of the basic facilities were also extended to this area from Kashmir like: telephone, telegraph and regular mail services. These activities and function provided off-farm job opportunities to the inhabitants of the area for the first time in the history.

During the reign of Partab Singh (1885-1925) land settlement was also completed. It was for the first time in the history that land revenue was levelled on the inhabitants based on comprehensive land assessment. For this purpose many criteria were adopted, including height from the sea level, soil fertility, aspect and water availability.³⁴ Land revenue was payable to the state in both cash and kind, because of need of the state. After the land settlement cultivable land surrounding the villages in the valley was divided into revenue states called '*Mouza*'.³⁵ Boundaries for the *Mouza* were demarcated and cultivable land was allotted to the individual households, with the status of permanent tenants with inheritance right. Water for irrigation was also distributed accordingly. Pastures; both high and low altitude; and forest were allotted to the *Mouza*, as a communal land. The right of utilization of these resources were and still are equal to all the residents or landowner of the *Mouza* irrespective of their clan and arrival in the village. In this way if any body buys a piece of land in any *Mouza* other than his own; he can utilizes the communal resources of that *Mouza*. This is one of the reasons that some people from the low altitude villages are buying land in the villages located on high altitudes. In the meantime after land settlement the extension of the cultivated land was regularized by law. It was made obligatory to take prior permission from the government for the extension of cultivated area and reclamation of the cultivable waste. This to the some extent regularized the expansion of cultivated land.

³⁴ Singh, T., *Assessment Report of Gilgit Tahsil*. opt cit p 7-11.

³⁵ It is a demarcated territorial unit for which separate revenue records including a cadastral map is maintained.

This period brought a lot of changes in Astor valley. In addition to the provision of few basic facilities including hospital, telephone and school the livelihood structure of the local inhabitants also changed to a greater extent. The improvement of Gilt-Badipur road not only facilitated communication and contact with Kashmir but also provided new job opportunities for the local inhabitants. The link between this valley and Kashmir increased considerably. Moreover, the position of Astor valley totally changed as a main supplier of commodities to the whole northern areas of Pakistan. Most of the explorers used this road on their way to Gilgit and Chitral. The number of ambulant trader and people involved in carriage business tremendously increased. The importance of Astor as a business centre can be easily judged from the fact that in 1888 outside Kashmir there was three bazaars in the northern mountainous belt one at Astor, one at Gilgit and one at Chitral.³⁶ Consequently job opportunities in state services and off-farm sectors also increased considerably.³⁷

This development is reflected in the establishment of new villages in the valley, particularly in the sub-valleys leading to the southern passes.³⁸ Moreover, job opportunities in the carriage activity and the state policy of colonization of agricultural land also attracted people from the surrounding areas. Most of these people settled in the valleys close to the passes leading to Kashmir i.e. Dass Kirim and Kala Pani Valleys. Additionally to efficiently carry out the state responsibilities of Kar-e-begar etc. many households also invited their relatives. The state also provided loans for the purchase of ponies for the transportation of food and other commodities from Kashmir. Nevertheless, there were some negative impacts of this as well. Most of the households were poor and unable to pay the land revenue and therefore, the state debt on the household increased considerably. Both forced labour, overexploited taxation system annoyed the local inhabitants. As a result compared to other localities in the northern mountainous belt the inhabitants of this valley suffered considerably.

Astor Valley enjoyed this position till late 1890s. However, in the late 1890s it became possible to travel directly to Gilgit from Rawalpindi without having to pass through Srinagar by means of a new road (not suitable, however, for wheeled traffic) which followed the Kaghan valley up to the Babusar pass and then descended to the Indus at Chilas.³⁹ Nevertheless, in the administrative report of Gilgit Agency for the year 1935 the importance of Kaghan valley road

³⁶ Durand *opt cit* 1899 p 19.

³⁷ Fazlur-Rahman., Historical Development and Settlement Process in Astor Valley, Northern Areas of Pakistan. *Peshawar University Teachers' Association Journal (PUTAJ)* 12, 2005, pp 23-46.

³⁸ Fazlur-Rahman., *Growth, Development and Functional Diversification of Settlements in the Northern Areas of Pakistan. A study of Astor Valley.* 1998 Unpublished M.Phil. Thesis submitted to the Department of Geography, University of Peshawar, Pakistan.

³⁹ Lamb *opt cit* 1991 p 56.

was highlighted as a major link between India and Gilgit and recommendations were made for the repair and reconstruction of bridges.⁴⁰

Astor After Independence from 1947 till to-Date

Another change in the political set up and historical development of the study area was the division of the Indian empire into two separate sovereign states, Pakistan and India, in the year 1947. This has also its impacts on the area under study because of the still unresolved Kashmir problem. According to the partition plan, Kashmir was supposed to be part of Pakistan because of Muslims majority, but the non-Muslim ruler acceded to India without the consent of the masses.

After partition apparently, for a while, this area under study economically suffered from the cease-fire line that later became the line of control. The government of Pakistan sent food supplies in the very first year after partition to Astor.⁴¹ The inhabitants of the northern Areas (Gilgit-Baltistan region) liberated this region in the year 1948 after a very tough struggle. They unconditionally joined Pakistan. This not only changed the political system and administrative status of the area but also substantially transformed the socio-economic conditions of the inhabitants. The old source region for food supply was separated and the passes towards the south of the study area lost their importance. This was a major setback to Astor valley. Before 1947, this valley was dependent on Kashmir due to its location on the main thoroughfare to the northern areas. Now, the source region for the supply of the exogenous food and other necessities changed from Kashmir to Punjab plain and the road was also shifted to the south via Chilas through the Babusar pass.

This deprivation of location, which was created by the Kashmir problem, was fully compensated by the government of Pakistan through the extension of development projects and creation of new departments to look after the on going developmental activities. The provisions of basic facilities were also extended to the far off areas. In this regard, two steps of the government played a pivotal role in changing the study area as well as the whole region. One of these was the abolition of land revenue and dethroning of the local rulers, which has been done by the government in 1974. The second step was the decision to extend the subsidized food to the inhabitants of the region. The later one was much improved with the construction of the Karakoram High Way in the late 1970s and the extension of link roads to the side valleys.

These development projects changed the life and livelihood of the inhabitants of the study area. On the one hand the local inhabitants were provided more off-farm jobs and on the other hand the areas became more

⁴⁰ *Administration Report of the Gilgit Agency for the year 1935*, p 2, India Office Library L/P&S/12/3288.

⁴¹ Hoffmann 1992 p 171.

accessible. A truckable road from Karakoram High Way to Astor is already completed. As a result about 90% of all the permanent settlements became accessible to motorized traffic and more than 80% of the total villages are electrified. Basic facilities were also provided to all the villages based on their population. Settlements having only 18 households has been provided with a primary school and large villages having middle and high schools with the higher secondary school in the main centre. Basic health facilities including first aid posts and dispensaries in small villages and hospital in the main centre of the valley have been established. In the livestock sector veterinary dispensaries are functioning in all the main villages with a veterinary hospital in the centre. Looking to the development trend with another angle to compare it with the Dogra period it is argued that during that regime from 1851 to 1947 the people, in most of the cases were unable to pay the land revenue (Archives of the Revenue Department Astor). Now the per capita income of the individual household member has increased to Rs. 4360.⁴² This is mostly the result of the latest change in the political setup in the form of independence and more off-farm jobs that were provided by the government of Pakistan.

Since 1993 some of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are also busy in providing the basic facilities and taking part in the development process. Aga Khan Rural Support Program (AKRSP) is one of the non-governmental organizations, which is actively working in the northern areas of Pakistan.⁴³ The main objective of this NGO is to achieve self-sufficiency at village level through the judicious use of available natural resources. Working under the principle of public participation, this organization filled the gap created by the dethroning of the local rulers.⁴⁴ These NGOs are helping the community in the provision of productive physical infrastructure. The main physical infrastructure projects are link roads, micro-hydel and irrigation channels.⁴⁵

Conclusion

From this study it is evident that how geographical location and changes in political set up have transformed the lives and livelihood of the inhabitants of

⁴² AKRSP., *Fourteen Annual Review of Aga Khan Rural Support Program*. Gilgit. Northern Areas of Pakistan. 1996

⁴³ Clemens, J. Rural Development in Northern Pakistan. Impacts of the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme. In: Dittmann, A. (Ed.): *Mountain Societies in Transition. Contributions to the Cultural Geography of the Karakorum*. Köln. (= Culture Area Karakorum Scientific Studies 6), 2000, pp 1-35

⁴⁴ Kreutzmann, H., Development trends in the high mountain regions of the Indian Subcontinent: A Review. In *Applied Geography and Development*. Vol. 42, 1993, pp 39-59.

⁴⁵ Fazlur-Rahman., Population Growth and Sustainability of Common Property Resource Management Systems in the Eastern Hindu Kush: The use of Communal Fodder Resources (Prangos Pabularia) in Mehlp Valley, Chitral, North Pakistan. In *Journal of Mountain Science*, Vol. 9, 2009, pp 380-393.

the study area. The political interests of the then super powers and the strategic significance of the passes of the Hindu Kush had played a major role in the decision-making and extension of basic facilities into this far flung area. For more than a century this valley under study played as a major thoroughfare for most part of the present Gilgit-Baltistan region and Chitral. However, in 1947 the division of Indian subcontinent into two sovereign states with Kashmir dispute had a drastic impact on this valley. The southern passes were totally closed and with the passage of time the Kaghan Valley road through Babusar pass and later on the Karakorum High Way were constructed and thus the source region for supply changed. Astor valley became a typical cul-de-sac. Nevertheless, the changing position of the cease-fire line into control line also enhanced the geo-political importance of this valley. The government line agencies as well as NGOs are working here for the construction of basic facilities and physical infrastructure. Administrative reforms were also underway and in 2004 Astor has been upgraded to a district.

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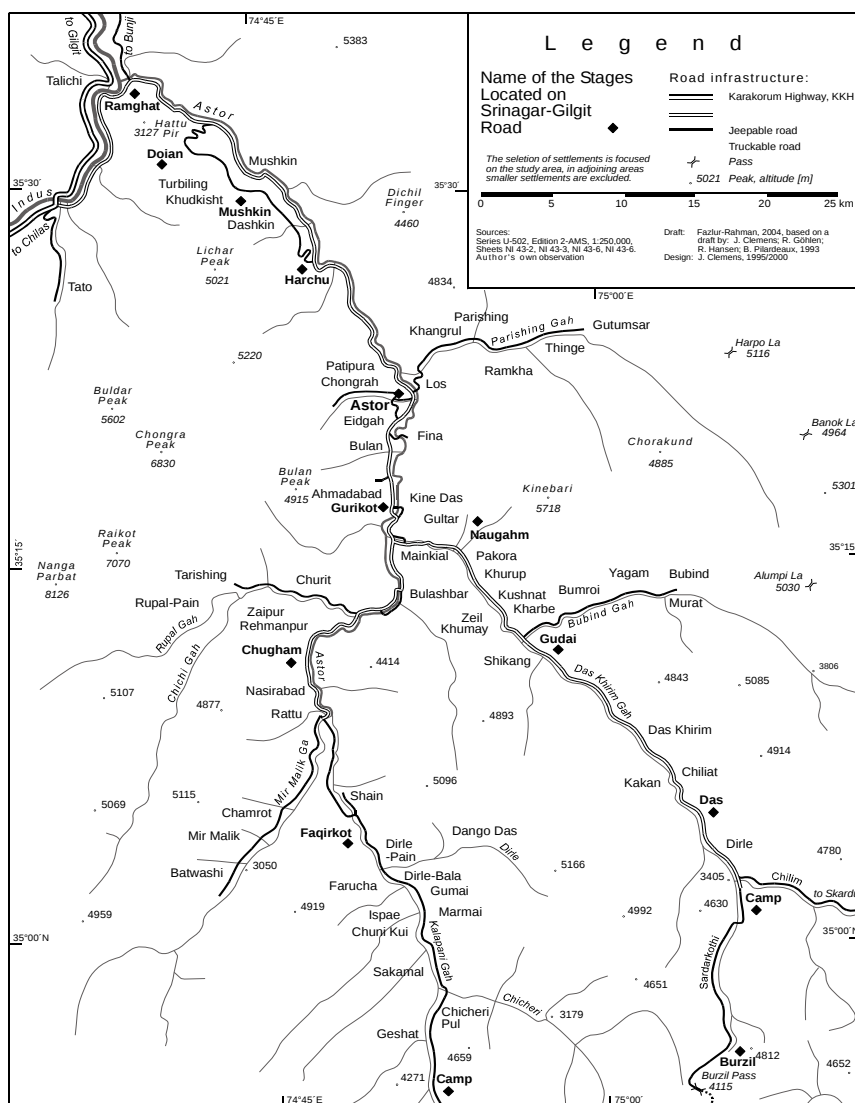
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Figure: 1 Map Showing Astor Valley, Settlements and Stages along Srinagar–Gilgit Route



SIACHEN GLACIER: THE CONFLICT & FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

*Faiz ur Rehman**

Abstract

The monumental elevations of the mountains have always been a test to the men capability to combat and endure in the extreme terrifying weather conditions since the history of wars. What forced India and Pakistan to fight the ever-highest battle on this planet? Definitely, its geo-strategic location as it lies at the cross-junction of China, India and Pakistan. It was the 19th Century, when the Great Game was played within its geographical compasses and now experiencing another power struggle since 1984 but this time the players are diverse. In most cases of war, the geography of the land and its wealth said to be a major cause, if it is factual then Siachen is the key model of it.

There have been a number of reconciliation efforts taken place since the beginning of the conflict but due to strategic advantage and the future design to enter into the Central Asia through that region, Indian Government has always used delaying maneuvers in signing any agreement over the viable resolution of Siachen conflict. On the other hand, after Gayari tragedy on 7th of April 2012, there is rising plea to declare Siachen as a buffer zone. The status quo will not serve either the State; however, the impact on the human, environmental and economic costs of this engagement will be shocking for both the nations in future.

Introduction

In Balti etymology, Siachen means black rose that broadly spread in the zone. Siachen Glacier (hereafter Siachen) is an undemarcated region and is a fundamental portion of Baltistan. It falls in the East of Karakoram/Himalaya and measures around 75 Km in length and 4.8 km in width and rises to approximately 7000 meters. Geographically, Siachen lies between North latitude 35°5' and East longitude 77°0. Positioned just northeast of the point NJ9842, Siachen is world's biggest glacier outside the polar region.¹ There are number of

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¹ Lyon, P., *Conflict Between India and Pakistan: An Encyclopedia*. ABC-CLIO 2008.

gigantic summits and Indira Coli² (the uppermost) that splits Central and South Asia. Siachen is a leading source of Nubra River that intersects the Shyok River, which is one of the offshoots of Indus River. The northern slopes of the Indira Coli Ridge lead to the Shaksgam valley.³ The average winter snowfall in this region is approximately 35 feet and temperatures can dip to -50°C .

The Siachen passes had been the traditional passage between Indian Sub-continent and Central Asia that several convoys used it for many centuries.⁴ In 1821 W. Moorcroft was the first who passed near the Siachen glacier's threshold while Henry Strachey became the first Westerner who discover glacier. With the Russian occupation on Khanates states of Central Asia in mid 19th century, it became distressing for the British interest in Karakoram region that resulted with an emergence of a Great Game there.⁵ Siachen is ever highest and one of the most expensive battlefield on this planet as started in 1984 and cost the lives of the hundreds of soldiers mainly due to the punitive weather conditions but still there is no sign of any conflict resolution on it.

The decision to conquer the Siachen pinnacles taken by the Indian military and political leadership has raised many questions in the mind of a common researcher: Was it a short-term Indian strategy, likes to stop the Pakistani encroachment in that region as Indian claimed or a long-term vision of the greater India? Is war a solution to this issue or both the nations has to rely on its political settlement? Regarding any sustainable solution, what opinions both the adversaries have? If status quo exist there then what will be its impact on that particular region? Hence, this article intends to analyze the ground realities and future perspective of this complex issue.

Strategic Significance

From strategic point of view, Siachen Glacier is located at an important location as it lies between the Saltoro Ridge and main Karakoram Range and oversees the tactical Karakoram Pass, which links Pakistan with China.⁶ Its mountainous pinnacles are the natural boundary between Pakistan and Central Asian states. Siachen can be approached by crossing the Saltoro

² Indira Coli, the northern most part of Siachen, directly overlooks Chinese occupied territory that was ceded by Pakistan to China in 1963.

³ Shaksgam Valley is an area of Baltistan, ceded by Pakistan to the People's Republic of China under the Pak-Sino border agreement of 3rd March 1963, which declared that after the settlement of the Kashmir conflict, the areas would be renegotiated with the Kashmir authority.

⁴ Kapadia, H., *Siachen Glaciers: The Battle of Roses*. Rupa & Co., New Delhi 2010, P 27.

⁵ The race for the supremacy between the British and the Russian in the high mountains of the Karakoram was called the Great Game.

⁶ Saltoro Ridge (18,000 to 24,000 feet) is a formidable ridge that runs roughly north-west to south-east. It overlooks Gilgit-Baltistan to its West and has to be crossed by anyone seeking access from Skardu in the Gilgit-Baltistan area through to the Karakoram Pass.

Ridge through Sia La,⁷ Bilfond La⁸ and Gyong La.⁹ These passes are strategically imperative for sustaining control over the region whereas Pakistan controls Gyong La, which is to the West of the Saltoro Ridge. Here Saltoro Ridge is very vital as Indian rheostat over Saltoro can jeopardize the Sino-Pak road link in that area.¹⁰

Indian military sources claimed that Pakistani switch in Karakoram would be a potential menace to Indian location in Ladakh in addition to Chinese positions in Aksai Chin. Maj. Gen. Sheru Thapliyal contended that as Corps Commander, “he updated Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in Sep-Oct 1983 about the strategic prominence of Siachen and Pakistan design to capture Khardung la¹¹ and overlook Leh by bringing artillery and rockets in Nubra valley¹² and then link up with Chinese at Aksai Chin.”¹³ Pakistani analysts take the Siachen conflict in a relatively dissimilar scenario. General (R) Mohammad Aziz Khan pronounces that control of Siachen has been a part of Indian policy in its direct access to the Central Asian states via Wah

⁷ Sia La is a mountain pass situated on Saltoro Ridge, some 60 km (37 mi) north-northwest of map point NJ 9842.

⁸ Bilafond La (meaning Pass of the Butterflies), is a mountain pass situated on Saltoro Ridge, sitting immediately west of the vast Siachen Glacier, some 40 km (25 mi) directly north of map point NJ 98042 which defined the end of the 1972 Line of Control between Pakistan and India as part of the Simla Agreement. Bilafond La was a prominent feature during the 1984 start of military action in the Siachen Conflict between India and Pakistan. The Indian Army captured the pass in 1984 along with Sia La to the north and Gyong La to the south. India currently maintains a fortified military base at Bilafond La.

⁹ Gyong La is a mountain pass situated on Saltoro Ridge controlled by Pakistani forces, is sitting southwest of the vast Siachen Glacier, some 20 km (12 mi) directly north of map point NJ 9842.

¹⁰ General (R) Mohammad Aziz Khan, interview by the author, Rawalpindi, 27th September, 2012.

¹¹ Khardung Pass is a high mountain pass located in Ladakh region of the Indian held Jammu & Kashmir. The pass on the Ladakh Range lies North of Leh and is the gateway to the Shyok and Numbr valleys as Siachen Glacier lies partway up the latter valley. Built in 1976, it was opened to motor vehicles in 1988. This pass is strategically important to India as it is used to carry supplies to the Siachen Glaciers. It is one of the highest (18,379 ft) motorable passes in the world.

¹² Nubra Valley’s original name was Ldumra (the valley of flowers) is about 150 km North of Leh, the capital town of Ladakh. The Shyok River meets the Nubra or Siachen River to form a large valley that separates the Ladakh and the Karakoram Ranges. The average altitude of the valley is about 10,000 ft. above the sea level. The common way to access this valley is to travel over the Khardung La from Leh.

¹³ Thapliyal, S., Strategic Importance of Siachen, In *Indian Defence Review*, no. 21 (1), 2006. Retrieved from <http://www.indiandefencereview.com/spotlights/strategic-importance-of-siachen/> (Aksai Chin is one of the two main disputed border areas between India and China. India claims Aksai Chin as the eastern-most part of the Jammu and Kashmir state. The line that separates Indian-administered areas of Jammu and Kashmir from Aksai Chin is known as the Line of Control (LAC) and is concurrent with the Chinese Aksai Chin claim line. Topographically, Aksai Chin is a high altitude desert).

Khan Strip¹⁴ in line with the Nehru hallucination of “Greater India” since 1947 and this might be the one of the foremost motives that India has always negotiated only on Jammu and Kashmir by eliminating Ladakh.¹⁵

Professor Ahmad Hasan Dani claimed that Indian imperialism behind its mission into Siachen is assign to an intrusion from Nubra into Khapalu and Skardu and then to axe Baltistan away from Gilgit and thus to interpolate the Pakistan-China nexus in the Gilgit- Baltistan.¹⁶ Secondly, Pakistan control over Gyong La that overlooks the Shyok¹⁷ and Nubra river Valleys and Indian access to Leh district. It is to be said that the struggle in capturing the water reservoirs will result the World War III in 21st century. India is aiming to physique five hundred new dams in near future and the storing of Indus River water in Ladakh region by controlling the Siachen, which will be a severe blow for Pakistani agriculture and a threat to its energy generation capacity.¹⁸ The Kargil war of 1999 was an extension of the Siachen Conflict as its main objective was to get control of the region and check the communication and transportation from Srinagar, Kargil, Leh-Manali to Siachen. In case of Pakistani command over the Kargil statures, Indian could be forced to airlift the daily supplies of life, arms and ammunition that could cost them 20 percent more than the Pakistan in Siachen region.¹⁹

Siachen Conflict

Pedigrees of the Siachen conflict originates in the non-demarcation of the Line of Control (LoC) between India and Pakistan, which loped North and northeast to the map grid point NJ 9842, near the Shyok River at the base of Saltoro range.²⁰ The Karachi agreement signed on 27th July 1949 recognized a Ceasefire Line that observed by the United Nation Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) and even at the time of Simla Agreement, it was acknowledged that there was no viability for any human endurance beyond this point. There was a polysemy in the agreement as it did not mention the clear status of the Siachen Glacier, stating that from the point NJ9842, the Line of Control would ensue "thence north to the

¹⁴ The Wakhan is located in the extreme northeast of Afghanistan. It contains the headwaters of the Arnu Darya (Oxus), and was an ancient corridor for travellers from the Tarim Basin (located in China's Xinjiang region) to Badakshan province of Afghanistan.

¹⁵ General (R) Mohammad Aziz Khan, interview by the author, Rawalpindi, 27th September, 2012.

¹⁶ Dani. A. H., article published in *The Muslim*, September 16, 1988, quoted by A.G Noorani.

¹⁷ The Shyok Valley is the valley of the Shyok River situated in Ladakh. The valley is close to the Nubra Valley. The Shyok River flows through northern Ladakh and the Ghangche District of Gilgit-Baltistan, a tributary of the Indus River, originates from the Rimo Glacier, one of the tributaries of Siachen Glacier.

¹⁸ General (R) Mohammad Aziz Khan, interview by the author, Rawalpindi, 27th September, 2012.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ganguly, S., *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions Since 1947*. Columbia University Press, New York 2004, p 84.

glaciers.”²¹ Later, both the sides construed these words in their own ways just to prove their claim to control that region.

Prior to 1984, there is no evidence of Indian or Pakistani perpetual presence in the area, however, the Indian sources claimed that from very first day, Pakistan had an eye on terrains in Ladakh and Shyok valley, which could let Pakistan to seize mountains and glaciers as well as Siachen.²² In 1948, the advancement of Pakistan army along the river Indus towards the Leh was the clear gesture of its future design in that particular region. After Pakistan-China border agreement in 1963, Pakistan had encouraged in yielding permits to the western mountaineering excursions.²³ On 24th February 1975, Pakistan started allowing the foreign mountaineers to scramble to the Siachen Glacier where Pakistan army officer operated as a liaison officer.²⁴

Between 1975 and 1981, there had been 20 foreign mounting trips reported and for all those, foreigners had to acquire the authorization only from Pakistan. This was testing water for Indian retort; however, Indian did not counter promptly as it did at the time of Sino-Pak Agreement in 1963 but became alarmed and heedful over the Pakistani activities next to the Chinese frontier. Earlier, by 1956-57, the edifice of military road between Xinjiang and western Tibet through the Aksai resulted, the Sino-Indian war of October 1962. China occupied Aksai Chin in 1962 war whereas the Trans-Karakoram Tract was relinquished by Pakistan to China in 1963.²⁵ Indian Government did not recognize the Sino-Pak agreement and sent protest letters to both China and Pakistan.

Earlier in 1975, United States Defence Mapping Agency²⁶ indicated Siachen as a part of Pakistani Held Northern Areas (Now Gilgit-Baltistan),

²¹ Ahmed, S., & Varun, S., *Freezing the Fighting: Military Disengagement on Siachen Glacier*, Cooperative Monitoring Centre Occasional Papers. Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque 1998.

²² Kapadia, H., *Siachen Glaciers: The Battle of Roses*. Rupa & Co., New Delhi 2010, p 75.

²³ The Sino-Pakistan Agreement is a 1963 document between the governments of Pakistan and China establishing the border between those countries. After Pakistan voted to grant China a seat in the United Nations, the Chinese withdrew the disputed maps in January 1962 and entered in an agreement that signed on 2nd March 1963 resulting in China withdrawing from about 750 sq. miles of territory and Pakistan withdrawing its claim to about 2,050 sq. miles of territory (which it had not in fact occupied or administered). It was signed by foreign ministers Chen Yi for the Chinese and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto for the Pakistani.

²⁴ Kapadia, H., *Siachen Glaciers*, p 81.

²⁵ Trans-Karakoram Tract is an area of about 5,800 km² (2,239 sq mi) along both sides of the Shansgam River, is entirely administered by the People's Republic of China but claimed by Pakistan until 1963. It is still claimed by India as part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan gave up its claim to the tract under a border agreement with China in 1963 with the provision that the settlement was subject to the final solution of the Kashmir dispute.

²⁶ The Defense Mapping Agency (DMA) was established from the Mapping Charting and Geodesy Division, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), by DoD Directive 5105.40 of January 1 1972, pursuant to a Presidential directive (press release), November 5, 1971, under authority of the National Security Act of 1947 (61 Stat. 495), July 26, 1947, as

followed by National Geographic Society's Atlas of the World, Historical Atlas of South Asia and the Times Atlas of the World, London. The official Atlas of Pakistan that published in 1985 has changed the disputed status of Gilgit-Baltistan and presented the Pakistani borders along the line of United States Defence Mapping Agency' map.²⁷ The events started in mid 1970s to reinforce the Pakistani entitlement of Siachen, provided a chance to the India Government to advance its army in that region.

Operation Meghdoot

Lt. Gen. M.L. Chibber, the Indian Commander of Northern Army revealed that after receiving the information on 21st August 1983 that Pakistan troops had occupied Bilafond La,²⁸ Indian Government decided to take control of the area in September 1983 after a military briefing to Indira Gandhi then the Prime Minister of India.²⁹ On 13th April 1984, Operation Meghdoot³⁰ was propelled by dropping armed units at Sia La and Bilafond La, two main passes along the Salto Ridge and established enduring posts there, which oversees the Siachen glacier, along its western outskirt. Nevertheless, the matter of fact is that India directed a military training mission to Antarctica in 1982 to adapt under Siachen Glacier like conditions, aiming to take control on Pakistan-China strategic connection. This was the identical strategy that Soviet Union had used in Afghanistan before its invasion in 1979.³¹

Exactly on the same year, Indian army positioned its troops at its highest and the most important points in Siachen. That move gave the Indian army an important tactical advantage, however, made dreadfully tough to sustain the supplying line to these forward positions.³² Later, India started strengthening its military power and busy in preparation of blue-water navy and improving its missile technology by following the philosophy that

amended. It publishes articles in the Federal Register initiating the consolidation of mapping functions previously dispersed among the military services.

²⁷ Kapadia, H., *Siachen Glaciers*, p 84.

²⁸ The problem precipitated on 21st August 1983 when a protest note from Northern Sector Commander of Pakistan was handed over to his counterpart in Kargil stating that Line of Control joins with the Karakoram Pass, also that all the area west of this extended line belongs to Pakistan. When Army Headquarters saw this and also got information that Pakistan troops had occupied Bilafond Pass, they ordered Northern Command to prevent the occupation of the Glacier area by Pakistan during the mountaineering season in 1984.

²⁹ Nair. P., Unending Fiasco in the Siachen Glacier, In *Economic and Political Weekly*. Mumbai 2011.

³⁰ Meghdoot literally means the cloud-messenger and is title of a play in Sanskrit penned by Kalidasa a few millenniums earlier. Meghdoot is also the name of an award that India Post presents for meritorious services to its employees annually.

³¹ In August 1979, General Ivan G. Pavlovski of Soviet Forces led a group of 60 officers on a several weeks long reconnaissance tour of Afghanistan and prior to the 1968 invasion, General Yepishev made a similar visit to Czechoslovakia.

³² Eric, S. M., *War at the Top of the World: The Struggle for Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tibet*. Routledge, New York 2001, pp 133-34.

power is itself a reason. Indian claims that it is its defence strategy against Chinese potential threat but in fact, China is out of its missile's range, and eventually this all will go against Pakistan.³³

Pakistan's Reaction

Pakistan swiftly reacted with its operation called as Ababeel (swallow) by troop deployments on the lower positions of Saltoro and confronted the Indian control at Soltoro Range.³⁴ Within a short period of time, the Indians were in control over the best of the glacier as Pakistan was late by just a week. Since then both sides have made numerous efforts to dislodge each other's militaries but with petite achievement. The Indian army has stretched its control over much of the hilly region including the passes of the Saltoro Ridge to the West of the Siachen while Pakistan sustained control over the western directions of the range.³⁵

Violation of Peace Agreements

The direct control of Siachen was a clear violation of both the agreements signed between these two contenders in 1949 and 1972 respectively. Even some of the Indian analysts divulged that the autarchic military occupation of any part of the LoC, even if it was undemarcated, was an open violation of the Simla Agreement.³⁶ "We swear by the Simla Agreement but merrily imply that it does not apply to Siachen since the LoC does not cover that region beyond NJ 9842 which is a wrong definition as Para 1 (ii) of the Agreement embodies an overriding commitment, independently of respect for the LoC."³⁷ As according to the Simla Agreement, both the countries are hypothetical to resolve their differences by nonviolent means through mutual dialogues. Pending the final settlement of any of the snags between the two countries, neither side shall unilaterally revise the situation nor shall both thwart the organization, backing or inspiration of any acts malicious in retaining the peace and harmonious relations.³⁸ Western sources claim that Siachen is the output of Kashmir conflict that resulted from Indian policy of imperialism in

³³ General (R) Mohammad Aziz Khan, interview by the author, Rawalpindi, 27th September, 2012.

³⁴ Ganguly, S., *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions Since 1947*. New York, Columbia University Press 2004, P. 84.

³⁵ McGirk, T., and Adiga, A., War at the Top of the World, In *Time Magazine*. 24 July 2005.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Raghavan, V. R., *The Siachen Impasse, Siachen: Conflict Without End*, no.19(23), 2002.

³⁸ Simla Agreement on ceasefire and improving bilateral relations between India and Pakistan signed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and President of Pakistan, Z. A Bhutto in Simla on July 2, 1972.

the Himalayan region in violation of the two agreements on Kashmir with Pakistan (Karachi agreement of 1949 and Simla agreement in 1972).³⁹

Diplomatic Efforts

The two-day talks (11th-12th of June 2012) on the Siachen issue between India and Pakistan at the Defence Ministry in the Pakistani garrison city of Rawalpindi have once again concluded without any accelerative task, however, both sides endorsed their assurance in staying engaged in their mutual quest for an sustainable settlement of the issue that has been obfuscating their relations.⁴⁰ Indian Defence Secretary Shashi Kant Sharma and Pakistani Defence Secretary Nargis Sethi, have led their delegations respectively. Notwithstanding Pakistan Army chief General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani's plea for the resolution on Siachen issue after Gayari tragedy on 7th of April 2012 where the death of 129 Pakistani soldiers and 11 civilians in an landslide, its conclusion was very much predictable in the absenteeism of reciprocally adequate procedure for demilitarization from Siachen where both fissionable opponents have positioned thousands of troops for years.

On 9th of June 2012, just two days before the talks, India's Defence Minister A. K. Antony said: "Do not presume any melodramatic declaration on an issue from one discussion, which is very imperative for us, especially in the milieu of national security."⁴¹ Even the foreign sources were not expectant any breakthrough as James Clapper, the US director of National Intelligence, mentioned in his annual report on worldwide threats succumbed in January 2012, that "Less progress has been made in discussions over the complex border issues of Siachen Glacier and Sir Creek, and we assess New Delhi will uphold a go-slow attitude in these dialogues."⁴² While other diplomatic sources termed it as old wine in a new bottle.⁴³

According to the media reports, the Pakistan ingeminated its plea for demilitarizing the Siachen glacier and pulling back troops to the pre-1972 locus and further called for the resolution of the issue under the provisions as discoursed in 1989 and 1992 while the Indian Government has made it clear that any settlement must comprise the validation and demarcation of contemporary military positions, the Actual Ground Line Position (AGLP) on

³⁹ Wirsing, R. G., *The Siachen Glacier Territorial Dispute with India*, In *Pakistan's Security under Zia 1977-1988*. St Martin's Press, New York 1991, pp 143-96.

⁴⁰ Demilitarizing Siachen: India, Pak differ on modalities, In *Hindustan Times*. New Delhi, 13th June 2012.

⁴¹ India and Pakistan hold Siachen Glacier Talks, In *BBC News*. 11th June 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-18391171>

⁴² Clapper, J.R., *Record on the Worldwide, Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence*. National Intelligence, USA 2012.

⁴³ Siachen Dispute, In *The Daily Dawn*. Islamabad, dated 13/06/2012, p 1.

Siachen.⁴⁴ In their joint proclamation issued on 12th of June 2012, both the sides reiterated their understandings in making stern, sustainable and result-oriented efforts for seeking an agreeable solution of this throbbing issue.⁴⁵

Since 1985, when the diplomatic efforts to find out an enduring solution to the Siachen conflict started between General Zia ul Haq then the President of Pakistan and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, there have been thirteen series of discussions on the Siachen between the two countries. Apart from the fifth & sixth meetings, all the talks between India and Pakistan met with the same doom. During the fifth meeting when both the countries were close to sign an treaty as it was stated in a joint announcement issued on June 17th 1989 by the Pakistani Foreign Secretary Dr. Humayun Khan and his Indian counterpart Mr. S. K. Singh in Islamabad announcing that the Indian Government decided to shuffle armies to locations occupied at the time of the Simla Agreement.⁴⁶ The exact position would be worked out by military specialists of both countries. Indian Foreign Secretary S.K. Singh held: "I would like to thank the Foreign Secretary, Dr. Humayun Khan, and validate everything he has said."⁴⁷

The term redeployment of forces rather than withdrawal was a Pakistani concession intended to enable Rajiv Gandhi to show the agreement to his military and to political rivals in an election year. However, the Pakistanis and others including media interpreted the word redeployment as military withdrawal from Siachen and the agreement was reflected a main triumph for Pakistan which provided a chance for Indian opposition leaders to use it a propaganda movement against Mr. Rajiv Gandhi who was going to contest the following election. The next morning, Indian Government condemned of any agreement with Pakistan over the joint departure of troops.⁴⁸

Later, during his trip to Pakistan in June 1989, Rajiv Gandhi publicized, "If only your Foreign Secretary had not stated the 1972 positions in talking of redeployment, we would not be having all this trouble."⁴⁹ Obliquely, Rajiv Gandhi has admitted the breach of the Simla Agreement when he said on November 16, 1989 in Kolkata: "we have recuperated about 5,000 square kilometers of part from occupied Kashmir in Siachen. We will not relinquish

⁴⁴ Siachen Talks End Without Breakthrough, In *The Daily News*. Islamabad, 13/06/2012.

⁴⁵ Ibid., P. 7.

⁴⁶ The Simla Agreement was signed between Indian and Pakistan on 2nd of July, 1972. The accord converted the Ceasefire Line of 1949 into Line of Control between Pakistan and India, which however, did not affect the status of the disputed territory. It was mentioned in Simla agreement that in Jammu and Kashmir, the line of control resulting from the ceasefire of December 17th, 1971, shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the recognized position of either side. Neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally, irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations.

⁴⁷ Raghavan, V. R., *Siachen: Conflict Without End*. Viking Books, New Delhi 2002, p 184.

⁴⁸ Lodhi, M., Kia Baraf Pigal Sakti Hai [Can Ice Melt?], In *The Daily Jang*. Islamabad, dated 6/05/2012.

⁴⁹ Akhund, I., *Trial and Error: The Advent and Eclipse of Benazir Bhutto*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2000, p 99-112.

one square kilometer of that."⁵⁰

Additional panorama was missed during the sixth round of talks from 2nd-4th of November 1992 when Pakistan decided to record the troops locations in an annexure with a provision that the positions evacuated would not be constituted by either side as a base for a legitimate claim or rationalize a political or moral right to the area specified. This was a clear sign of liveness that Pakistan had indicated in meeting the Indian plea for endorsement of AGLP. However, the Indian Government clogged its Defense Secretary N.N. Vohra (now the Governor of Indian Held Kashmir) from signing such agreement. Later Mr. Vohra disclosed, "We had concluded the manuscript of an agreement at Hyderabad House by around 10 P.M on the last day. Signing was set for 10 am next morning but later that night, directions were given to me not to go onward the next day but to clinch substances in our next round of talks in Islamabad in January 1993." Of course, that day never came, Mr. Vohra added. "That's the way these things go."⁵¹

While Indian sources claimed that due to the Pakistani approach, the dialogues were resultless as Pakistan negated to move from its highly technical posture on the issue.⁵² Later, Pakistan drew its concession in 1994 and interrelated Siachen to Kashmir issue.⁵³ The matter of fact was that the Indian attitude was not serious in solving the Siachen issue and just bargaining the time as Narasimha Rao (then the Prime Minister of India) had no such excuse in 1992.

A current avowal by the Indian Army Chief General Bikram Singh has exposed the inner mindset of Indian army when on September 19, 2012, he said that Indian military would not like to step down of the strategically vital positions for which a lot of blood has been lost and army has tendered its feelings to the Indian Government which has a ultimate authority in this regard and it is very imperative for India to grip that region.⁵⁴ In order to strengthen its hold in the region, Indian Government has started the construction on the strategic Rohtang Tunnel, which will connect all weather roads between Leh and Manali. The tunnel will be decisive in upholding the supply lines to its forward posts in Ladakh and Siachen Glacier and also a strong hint of Indian future strategic planning regarding the Siachen.

Human Cost

Pakistani Military sources claimed that out of the 8,000 combatants deployed at Siachen, about 3,000 Pakistani soldiers have been died since

⁵⁰ Raghavan, V. R., *Siachen: Conflict Without End*. Viking Books, New Delhi 2002, p182.

⁵¹ Retrieved from <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article3509787>

⁵² Dixit, J. N., *Anatomy of a Flawed Inheritance: Indo-Pak Relations 1970-1994*. New Delhi, South Asia Books, 1995, P. 168.

⁵³ Raghavan, V. R., *Siachen: Conflict Without End*. 2002.

⁵⁴ Must hold Siachen Positions, In *Hindustan Times*. New Delhi, dated 19/09/2012.

1984, about 90 percent of them perished due to frostbites, avalanches and other technical hitches. Average, one Pakistani soldier is killed every fourth day while one Indian soldier is killed every other day.⁵⁵ Lt. Gen. M. L. Chibber, says that this bleeding ulcer (Siachen Glacier) has cost us nearly 20,000 victims in over twenty years.⁵⁶ However, the Indian Government has proclaimed that around 846 armed forces personnel have lost their lives in the Siachen sector since 1984 as Defence Minister A. K. Antony in a retort to a query in the Lok Sabha on 27th August 2012.⁵⁷ Indian army did not distinguish between those who died in warfare and those who lost their deaths in snowstorms.

Financial Cost

Due to of the higher number of troops and deliveries are transported by helicopter, the cost of Siachen is projected about Rs. 48 million per day for Indian army, which is nearly three-four times more than Pakistan as most of its posts are at lower elevation and also abridged the logistical cost by constructing roads at its positions across the Siachen approaches.⁵⁸ Whereas Pakistan sources claimed, that Indian logistic cost is ten times higher than that of Pakistan.⁵⁹

Environmental Issue

Global warming has had its worst impact there on Himalayas region. According to the initial findings of a survey by Pakistan Meteorological Department, the Siachen Glacier has been receding for the past 30 years and is melting at disquieting ratio.⁶⁰ Since 1984, the presence of thousands of troops in the purview of the Siachen Glacier has affected severe environmental degradation of an ecosystem already affected by climate modification. The temperature rise at Siachen was reported at 0.2 degree Celsius annually in 2007, causes melting and avalanches.⁶¹ According to another study report, the glacier is retreating at a rate of 110-meter per year.⁶²

⁵⁵ Abbas, A., In *The Express Tribune*. Islamabad, dated 20/04/2012.

⁵⁶ Thapliyal, S., Strategic Importance of Siachen, In *Indian Defence Review*, no. 21(1), 2006. Retrieved from <http://www.indiandefencereview.com/spotlights/strategic-importance-of-siachen/>

⁵⁷ Statement issued by the Indian Defence Minister A. K Antony in the Lok Sabha (the lower house of Indian Parliament) on 27th August 2012.

⁵⁸ Kapadia, H., *Siachen Glaciers: The Battle of Roses*. P 211.

⁵⁹ General (R) Mohammad Aziz Khan, op. cited

⁶⁰ Gupta, K. R., *Encyclopedia of Environment Global Warming*, Vol.6. Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, 2008, pp 105-112.

⁶¹ Daudpota, I., and Arshad. H. A., Exchange Siachen Confrontation for Peace, In *The Hindu*, dated 16/02/2007.

⁶² Gupta, K. R., *Encyclopedia of Environment*.

It is appraised that the Siachen Glacier will be reduced to about one-fifth of its current size by 2035.⁶³ Chemical blasting for the purpose of constructing camps and posts will be the one of the main motives of its retreat as thousands of tons of military trash and human surplus lie dumped in the area. It is assessed that due to burning of fuel for cooking, warming and transportation of men and material by land and air, about 200 tons of carbon dioxide is released into the air each day. Due to the extreme climatic conditions, this large amount of litter, empty bullets and parachutes dumped on the glacier, neither be decayed nor can be scorched.⁶⁴ The region is home to intermittent species like snow leopard, brown bear, Marco Polo sheep and copious erratic floras are now at threat because of mammoth military existence in the region.⁶⁵

Current Situation

The Indian army has established control over the upper pinnacles of the Siachen and most its offshoot glaciers as well as the two of the three leading passes of the Siachen, Sia La and Bilafond La while Pakistan controls the Gyong La and successfully choked Indian access to Korakorum-2, the second highest peak in the world and other adjacent summits. The situation is that Pakistanis cannot get up to the Siachen glacier, while the Indians cannot come down. Indian sources claimed that more than 1,000 square miles of terrain has been taken by its military operations in Siachen since 1984.⁶⁶ While Pakistan acknowledged that India seized almost 900 square miles of territory.⁶⁷ Direct skirmishes have been terminated in that region but both the sides have sustained their sturdy military presence in the area since the ceasefire of 2003. Both, Indian and Pakistani military establishments validate that war is not a solution of Siachen conflict; however, war leads a way towards the conflict resolution.⁶⁸

Indian Opinion

⁶³ Markey, D., Pakistan, In *Climate Change and National Security: A Country-Level Analysis*. Georgetown University Press, Washington D.C. 2012, p 86.

⁶⁴ Action Aid, *Natural Resource Management in South Asia*. Pearson Education, 2010, p 58.

⁶⁵ Duparcq, E., Siachen Tragedy – day 5: Bad Weather Dogs Avalanche Search Efforts, In *The Express Tribune*. Islamabad, dated 11/04/2012.

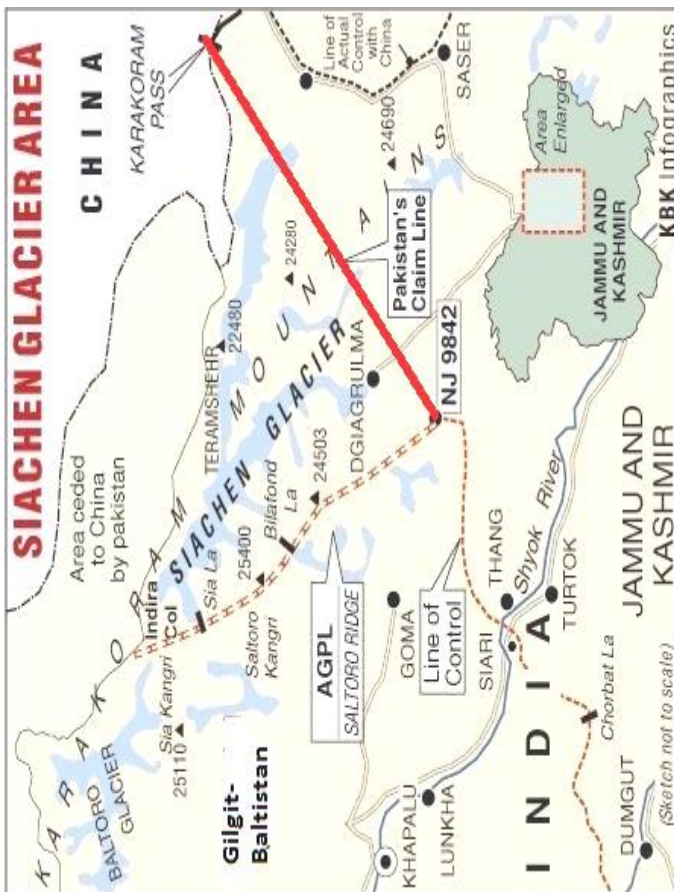
Retrieved from <http://tribune.com.pk/story/362986/siachen-tragedy-day-5-bad-weather-dogs-pakistan-avalanche-search-efforts/>

⁶⁶ Edward, W., The Himalayas War at Top of the world. In *Time Magazine*, dated 31/07/1989. Retrieved from <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,958254,00.html>

⁶⁷ Musharraf, P., *In the Line of Fire: A Memoir*. Free Press, New York 2006, pp 68–69.

⁶⁸ Brigadier Raja Qadeem Iqbal, interview by the author, Muzaffarabad, 31st July 2012.

India echoed that the current locations of both armies on the Siachen along the AGPL should be demarcated after a joint survey which will be a reference point in case a dispute arises in the future. India draws a line from North to northwest from NJ 9842 that runs towards the glaciers along the crunches formed by the Saltoro Range, which according to the Indian stance, is a recognized international standard of border delineation. Indian claim that the Siachen glacier lies within the Jurisdiction of Indian Held Kashmir based on the logic that Kashmir is the integral part of India. Later India wishes to apply the identical code with its disputed Himalayan border with China.⁶⁹



Source: <http://im.rediff.com/news/2005/may/26siachen.gif>

⁶⁹ Khosa, R. S., The Siachen Glacier Dispute: Imbroglio on the Roof of the World, In *Cotemporary South Asia*, no.5, 1999.

Pakistani Opinion

Pakistan pulls a straight line in a north-eastern direction from NJ 9842 up to the Karakoram Pass on its border with China. Pakistan claims based on the ground that the Siachen glacier falls within the Pakistani-administered area of the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir called Gilgit-Baltistan and declined to endorse the AGPL and demanded that both the countries should simultaneously withdraw their troops from Siachen to the pre-1972 positions.⁷⁰ Chinese factor is also very important in this conflict as China supports Pakistani standpoint on Siachen and both the countries have their strategic interests. Sino-India war of 1962 followed by the Sino-Pak border agreement in 1963, brought Pakistan and China closer to each other.

In 1960s, China had no intension to play any specific role in this region but now China has emerged as a challenging economic and military power; and needs to find new markets, new sources of energy and new active role. In that context, China wants to have a further authority in regional matters. In order to feed its growing economy; China has its energy-driven interest in the Middle East.⁷¹ China strategic control over Gwadar Port and ballooning Pak-China military and economic ties would be an anxiety for India. On the other hand, direct oil supply line from Middle East to China via Gwadar Port would be vexing for the United States. The Middle East is also a strategic logistics and trade hub for China's exports and market access in Europe and Africa as the European Union has become the leading Chinese trading partner.⁷² While United States wants Gwadar to become the next Dubai, which could act as a base for the United States Navy as well as a marketable port to trade oil and shelving Iran's significance within the region. It is not likely that India and America would endure hushed viewers and provide China a free hand in the region.⁷³ It seems that Pakistan would have to face some proxy wars in near future.

Conclusion

Several high-level meetings have been organized between Pakistani and Indian defence and foreign secretaries as well as senior military personnel to talk a pacific end to the twenty-eight years old Siachen conflict that caused thousands of sufferers, mainly due to hostile climatic conditions and harsh terrain, however, there have been some key differences over the modalities of withdrawal of the troops since the establishment of suave efforts. Indian

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Christina Lin, "The New Silk Road: China's Energy Strategy in the Greater Middle East," *Policy Focus* 109, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, April 2011.

⁷² National Bureau of Statistics of China, *Statistical Communiqué on the 2011 National Economic and Social Development*, February 22, 2012. Available on <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/xw/t272113.htm>.

⁷³ Retrieved from: <http://registan.net/2011/01/31/baluchistan-is-more-than-just-a-wasteland/>

attitude remained unchanged since its occupation of Siachen Glacier. Even after an elongated confrontation, the armies of both countries divulge that the military solution is incredible and these two nations have to rely on the political settlement of this fundamental issue.

Now Pakistan is interested in resolving the issue, however, Indian using the adjournment tactics as its involvement in diplomatic talks is the consequence of international pressure. The withdrawal of the Indian army from Siachen or to declare a buffer zone, will be a crucial decision for Indian Government as what riposte it has to satiate the Indian civil society while billions of dollars have been smoldered away since its occupation whereas linking Ladakh with Wah Khan Strip and to maintain control over Karakoram Highway will be a hard nut to crack as Siachen is a complex issue which involves not only India and Pakistan but also China, which it is directly and indirectly involved in this issue as China has its own economic interest with Pakistan and beyond. Chinese interest and involvement has strengthened the Pakistani position on Siachen but on the other hand, Chinese desire to control Gwadar port would involve Pakistan into very multifaceted situation as United States and India would not like the Chinese presence there. Here Pakistan needs more focus in strengthening Baluchistan security, as Gwadar will become the one of the most important ports in the world in future.

The best way forward is that Pakistan and India should enter into a pragmatic arrangement by declaring Siachen as a buffer zone by pulling their armies back to pre-1972 positions through the proposals of 1992, which should be acceptable for the Indian Government to gratify its civil society otherwise the status quo will not serve either the nation and in case of any forward campaign in that region by Indian army will jeopardize the peacemaking efforts as seeds of clash are still there. Likewise, the military presence in the region will cost huge financial and human loss and melting glacier will result a climate change causing exceptional cataclysm in the rivers' system.

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